FRIENDS
OF ACPL

PUBLIC LIBRARY
FORT WAYNE & ALLEN CO. IND.

j398.2 St45
C156839

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

of

Fort Wayne and Allen County, Ind.

Information For Country Borrowers

Books are free to all residents of Allen County. They may be borrowed from the Main Library at Fort Wayne or from any Branch, Reading Room, Deposit Station or School Library in Allen County.

Books will be sent by parcel post, prepaid to any borrower living a distance from a Library Station.

COUNTY DEPARTMENT
ANTHONY 3333

LIBRARY BUREAU CAT. NO. 1165

St45
C156839

FRIENDS
OF ACPL

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/storyofgalahad0000mary

THE STORY OF SIR GALAHAD

RETOLD FROM LE MORTE D'ARTHUR OF SIR THOMAS MALORY AND THE ORIGINAL STORIES BY

MARY BLACKWELL STERLING

ILLUSTRATIONS BY WILLIAM ERNEST CHAPMAN

PUBLISHED BY E. P. DUTTON & CO.
31 W. 23RD ST. NEW YORK.

j 398.2
St 45

COPYRIGHT, 1908
BY
E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

TO THREE KNIGHTS I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

To you whom God called on high to keep the Grail — in memory of the inspiration you brought. To you who walk the common way of every day life greatly—with gratitude for years of loving service. To you, who like Galahad have been called to heal—in thankfulness for *dreams and visions.*

NOV 15 1963
CO SCHOOLS
C156839

"The whole story is not far away from me but present here—its right and wrong—its temptation; there was no vow a man could take then which a man must not take now; every man still has his Camelot and his King, still has to prove his courage and his strength to all men . . . and then after he has proved these, he has—as his last, highest act of service in the world . . . to lay them all down, give them all up, for the sake of his spirit. I too, in my life am to go in quest of the Grail."

From *The Choir Invisible*,
James Lane Allen.

CONTENTS

PAGE

Introduction: The Meaning of the Story To-day 1

Prologue: How Joseph of Arimathea Brought the Sangreal to Avalon 7

CHAPTER

I. Of how Arthur was Chosen King of England 18

II. How King Arthur Received Excalibur from the Lady of the Lake 25

III. How King Arthur Wedded Guinevere, and of the Round Table and the Siege Perilous 28

CHAPTER		PAGE
IV.	How the Lady of the Lake Asked a Gift of King Arthur	37
V.	How Balin Smote the Dolorous Stroke that Wounded King Pellam	45
VI.	Of the Sorrowful Death of Balin and Balan and of Balin's Sword	52
VII.	How Sir Launcelot Came to the Castle of the Sangreal and of the Birth of Galahad	57
VIII.	How Sir Bors Came to the Castle of the Sangreal and Saw the Child Galahad	64
IX.	Of how Galahad was Made a Knight	70
X.	How Letters were Found Written in the Siege Perilous and of the Marvellous Adventure of the Sword	75
XI.	How the Old Man Brought Galahad to the Siege Perilous	81

CHAPTER		PAGE
XII.	How Sir Galahad Drew Balin's Sword out of the Stone	85
XIII.	Of the Tournament of Farewell	89
XIV.	Of the Marvellous Appearance of the Sangreal at Camelot and of the Vow of the Knights	92
XV.	Of how the Knights Departed from Camelot	96
XVI.	Of the Adventure of the White Shield	99
XVII.	How Sir Galahad Heard the Story of the White Shield	104
XVIII.	Of the Marvel of the Tomb, and how Melias was Made a Knight	109
XIX.	Of the Adventure that Melias Had, and how Sir Galahad Revenged him	114
XX.	How Sir Galahad Came to the Castle of the Maidens and Destroyed the Wicked Customs therein	119

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXI.	How Sir Galahad Met with Sir Launcelot and Sir Percivale	126
XXII.	How Sir Percivale Came unto a Monastery where he Found King Mordrains . .	131
XXIII.	How Sir Galahad Rescued Sir Percivale, and of Sir Percivale's Adventures in the Forest	134
XXIV.	How Sir Galahad Fought at a Tournament	141
XXV.	How Sir Galahad Came to a Ship and Found therein Sir Bors and Sir Percivale . .	146
XXVI.	How the Three Knights Entered another Ship, and of the Wonders therein . . .	151
XXVII.	How King Solomon's Wife Devised the Wonder Ship	157
XXVIII.	How Percivale's Sister Gave Sir Galahad the Golden Girdle	162

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXIX.	How the Three Knights Came to a Castle and how Sir Galahad Delivered One therein	165
XXX.	Of the Castle of the Strange Custom	171
XXXI.	Of the Death of Percivale's Sister	175
XXXII.	How Sir Launcelot Met with his Son Galahad	181
XXXIII.	How Sir Galahad Left his Father and how Sir Launcelot Returned to Camelot .	186
XXXIV.	How Sir Galahad Delivered King Mordrains and Moys	191
XXXV.	How Percivale and Bors Met with Sir Galahad and how they Came to the Castle of Carbonek	195
XXXVI.	Of the Marvellous Vision that Came to the Three Knights, and how Sir Galahad Healed the Wounded King . . .	199

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXXVII.	How the Three Knights Came unto the City of Sarras and how Sir Galahad was Made King of Sarras	204
XXXVIII.	How Sir Galahad Beheld the Sangreal Uncovered . . .	210
XXXIX.	Of the Sorrow that Percivale and Bors Made when Sir Galahad was Dead; of the Death of Sir Percivale and of how Sir Bors Returned unto Camelot	213
	Notes	217

ILLUSTRATIONS

FACING PAGE

Sir Bors Sees the Child Galahad (*Frontispiece*) 15

The Coming of the Sangreal to Camelot . 40

The Departure of the Knights . . . 80

Sir Galahad Overthrows Launcelot and Percivale 120

The Golden Girdle 130

Galahad Meets with His Father . . 140

Galahad Beholds the Sangreal Uncovered 150

THE STORY OF SIR GALAHAD

Introduction: The Meaning of the Story To-day

THE story of Galahad has been passed over by writers, who considered it a monkish creation too full of ecclesiasticism and lacking in human interest. This has been due greatly to the fact that the story has not been properly presented, for it is impossible for the casual reader to gain a true insight into the tangles of Malory's picturesque prose. But by giving the story consecutive form, by making intelligible some of Malory's vague constructions, and by weeding out certain wordy and mystic ones, the golden thread of a beautiful narrative is discovered.

Obviously the story is one of religious

uplift, but as clearly indicated as the religious theme are the healthy human interest and the stirring action of knightly deeds. Galahad lived in the world among his fellowmen, and although he seems to move as one predestined to high, even miraculous achievement, neither his words nor deeds suggest the ascetic or a life of priestly consecration.

The story typifies the quest for the ideal, and we who are heirs to the spiritual life of the past can look back with interest and perhaps surprise to find a message in it for us to-day. The pageantry of knighthood has passed from us, but the ideals it stands for are lived over again by each child, and they are in part for him the foundations of the true courtesy and virtue of our social life. The story stirs him like a bugle-call to a yearning for high achievement; no Arthurian tale, I think, makes so much for simple chivalry, courtesy, right thinking and living, enabling the child to live again through all that flowering time of beauty,

which our race once loved to express in outward symbols. The child hears the story "with the heart," and is helped to express the "outward and visible," which is "the sign of an inward and spiritual grace."

The search for the Grail goes on though we are no longer encouraged by the actual symbol; each age is so fed as to uncover some of the wonders the Grail represents, and in our own day there is greater effort than ever by "the seekers," to do away with that materialism which keeps us from *seeing*. The motive of healing has also its meaning for to-day, for already there has broken over the world the Dawn of that To-morrow, when the relation of right thinking to health shall be understood.

Prologue

How Joseph of Arimathea Brought the Sangreal to Avalon

Here beginneth the story of that most precious vessel which came to be called the Sangreal or Holy Grail.

WHEN Jesus supped with his disciples in the upper room on the night before his death, "he took bread, and when he had given thanks, brake it and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of me.' After the same manner also he took the cup when he had supped, saying, 'This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do

as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.' "

It was when the Supper was over, and they had gone to the mountain to pray, that there came into the room Joseph of Arimathea, a secret follower of Jesus, and he took from the table the dish which Jesus had used that he might carefully guard it. Standing at the foot of the Cross on the morrow, Joseph caught in this dish the blood which flowed from Jesus' pierced side, and he begged the spear from the soldier who had made the wound. So he became the guardian of these two remembrances of his Master.

When Pilate discovered that Joseph had been a follower of Jesus, he had him cast into prison, and there uncared for and forgotten Joseph remained for forty-two years.

At this time Titus was Emperor of Rome, and, hearing of the wonderful healings accomplished by the Christians in Jerusalem, he came there with his son Vespasian, who was sick with the leprosy,

hoping that he could find some one to heal him. He sent forth a request that there should be brought to him something which Jesus had touched, so men came to the palace bringing with them the napkin of St. Veronica, a cloth which this woman in pity had offered Jesus to wipe his brow with and on which was left an impression of his face. Through this sacred relic Vespasian was healed, and Titus set out to punish those who had wronged the Christians. He was told of the good man Joseph who had been kept in prison so long, and he went to release him. As he was lowered into the prison he found not darkness and misery as he had expected, for he saw a radiant light; the prisoner was cleanly clothed, and his face shone with happiness. Vespasian marvelled, and questioned Joseph, who replied: "Sir, the years have been to me as days only, for from this Vessel which I brought with me I have been fed and my strength has been preserved."

Joseph told Vespasian many stories of how he had been cared for during the long years of his imprisonment, after which the Emperor took him to his palace, where he was held in all honor.

In the night there came to Joseph a vision, and a voice said: "Take the Vessel and Spear and set out from Jerusalem with a band of followers, and journey till God leads you to the land where He would have you dwell."

Joseph first made a covering for the Vessel, which he placed in a small chest (called an ark) that he might carry it reverently; then with his wife and sons and a band of followers he left Jerusalem and journeyed till he came to the city of Sarras, which is the far East, in Babylonia. Here he presented himself at the court of the King, Evelake, and after he had told the King and Queen of his journey he spoke to them of the wonders of the treasure he carried and of the healings done in Jerusalem. They listened courteously to

him, but could not understand these new teachings of the Christians.

Evelake at this time was at war with a Saracen king named Tholme la Feintes, and Joseph assured him that if he would believe as he did, God would give him the victory. He made for Evelake a white shield marked in the centre with a red cross, which he bade him use should he find himself worsted. In the midst of the battle, when it seemed that he would be defeated, Evelake raised the shield, at sight of which Tholme and his men fled, leaving the victory to Evelake. Another sign Joseph showed the King, for he called to him a soldier whose hand had been cut off and bade him touch the cross on the shield. Straightway the soldier's hand was restored. Evelake was then convinced, he and his whole household were baptized; his name was changed to Mordrains and his brother-in-law called Seraphe received the name of Nasciens.

Joseph now left a few followers in Sarras

to teach Mordrains further and with the others he continued on his journey. In their long pilgrimage many dangers were overcome. Ever a voice guided them and once on the shore of a sea, when they knew not how to cross, Joseph was directed to spread his garment upon the water and embark upon it; thus they passed safely over.

One day they came to an island, which though it was the winter time was covered with apple trees in full bloom. Joseph reached the shore first and as his staff, which was made of a hawthorn tree, touched the ground it burst into blossom.

"Behold," said he, "how God speaks to us and tells us that this is the land where He would have us dwell."

Here on this island, called Avalon, Joseph built from the rushes at the water-side a little church in which he placed the Ark and Spear.

Now the King of the country was named Crudel, and when he heard of these

strangers, he sent his men to bring them to him and had them thrown into prison; but tidings of their peril came to Mordrains, who set out with Nasciens and an army and delivered them.

One day a voice spoke to Joseph and said: "Joseph, true servant of God, now build ye to hold the Ark and the Spear a table like to that table at which Jesus sat with his disciples; and there shall ye sit with your followers and sweet shall be the serving of the Vessel to all."

Straightway Joseph obeyed and built a table where he might sit with his chosen followers; one seat was left vacant to represent Jesus' place and all were warned against sitting there, for the seat was to remain empty until one should be found worthy enough to occupy it.

So began a life of prayer and service for Joseph and his followers and the Vessel cared for them in wonderful ways. Once when they were far from home and in need of food, Joseph asked of a woman whose

hut they passed, a loaf of bread. He placed the loaf beside the Vessel which he carried and prayed for help. The answer came, for the loaf was multiplied so that there was abundance for all.

Another day when Joseph was preaching to many people, the Vessel fed all worthy ones but the unworthy received no food. They called upon Alein the Keeper of the Vessel to help them and he bade them wait for a sign. He took a fish which he had caught and did with it as Joseph had done with the loaf of bread, and enough fish appeared to feed the waiting ones.

From this time Alein was called the "Rich Fisher" and after him each Keeper of the Vessel was known as the Fisher King.

As Joseph wandered once in a forest he was taken prisoner and wounded with a sword thrust in his side. But arriving where his persecutors dwelt he healed one who was dying and restored to life a man who had been killed by a lion. So he won his freedom and these men were turned to

his faith. The pieces of the sword that had wounded him Joseph saved, and he declared that some day a brave knight who was to be Keeper of the Vessel should mend the sword.

Even here at Avalon where such blessings were, sadness came; for one day a follower called Moys tried to sit in the vacant place. But seven flaming hands from heaven seized him away, and for punishment he was tortured with flames and might not be released it was said, till the one was come who should rightfully occupy the seat. Sometimes, Joseph prayed for rain from heaven to cool Moys' pain and this was granted. Misfortune came also to Mordrains who with Seraphe had remained in Avalon to help Joseph. Each day Joseph remained alone before the Ark to pray, when sweet visions came to him; Mordrains desired also to be there but Joseph warned him that there came a light from the Vessel which only he might gaze upon. Notwithstanding Joseph's words, Mordrains remained one

day and so was stricken blind, and the Spear fell from the Table and wounded him grievously. Never could he be healed until the promised one should come who was to heal Moys.

The years went on, Joseph died, and his younger son Galaad became Keeper of the Vessel; in time a chapel of stone stood in the place of the first thatched one, a Table of Silver replaced the first simple one that held the Ark. Now who first began to call the Vessel the Holy Grail (Sangreal) we are not told, but by this name it came to be known. The Grail was of benefit not only to those who guarded it, but often where there was sickness it appeared to men and healed them and turned many to better living. The Vessel was always covered, till the time when Galahad saw it openly at Sarras, but its presence was known by a great light and sweet odors; sometimes rare food was bestowed.

So it came to be the time of King Arthur in whose reign were many adventures of

the Holy Grail accomplished. The Grail was then kept in the Castle of Carbonek, in the country of Listenaise, near to Avalon but many a day's journey from Arthur's Castle at Camelot. Here lived King Pellam the Keeper of the Grail, his brother King Pelles, and Pelles' daughter Elaine.

Now in this book will be read of how King Pellam was wounded; of how certain of Arthur's knights visited the Grail Castle; and of how Sir Galahad the Best Knight of the World healed the Wounded King and others and took the Sangreal back to Sarras where he became its last Keeper and King of Sarras. But first will be read of how Arthur was chosen King of England, of how he received the sword Excalibur; of how he wedded Guinevere, and of the Round Table and the Siege Perilous.

I

OF HOW ARTHUR WAS CHOSEN KING OF ENGLAND

It befell in the days of Uther Pendragon, King of England, that Merlin the wise man of his Court came to him at the birth of his son and begged the King to give the child into his keeping. Merlin was held in high esteem on account of his wisdom and magic and the King was ever ready to follow his counsel. So on that same day, Igraine, the child's mother, bound him in a cloth of gold, and the King commanded two knights and two ladies to take the baby and give him

to a man they should find waiting at the postern gate of the Castle. When Merlin received the child he brought him to a good old man named Ector whose wife was to nourish him, and they promised to bring him up as their own son. And the child was christened and named Arthur.

Many years the realm was in peril, for every lord and baron of the land desired to be made King. Then Merlin went to the Archbishop of Canterbury and counselled him to send for all the lords of the realm and all the gentlemen of arms and bid them come to London at Christmas time, for he thought God would then send a sign to show them who was to be King of England. So, by the advice of Merlin, the Archbishop sent word to all the lords and gentlemen of arms that they should come to London by Christmas. When they heard this command these lords and barons tried to be better men that perchance one of them might be chosen King.

In the greatest church of the time in

London, St. Paul's, all the lords and gentlemen at arms assembled at Christmas to pray. When the service was done, there appeared in the churchyard a great marvel, for there was seen a stone four feet square of marble and resting on it an anvil of steel a foot high, into which stuck a fair sword. When the Archbishop saw this he led the way to the churchyard that all might see this wonder, and when they drew near they saw that letters of gold were written on the sword which said: "WHOSO PULLETH THIS SWORD OUT OF THIS ANVIL IS RIGHTWISE BORN KING OF ENGLAND."

Straightway some of the lords essayed to draw the sword but there was none might move it.

"He is not here," said the Archbishop, "that shall draw the sword; but doubt not, for God will make him known."

Then it was ordained that ten knights should stay by the sword to watch it and the Archbishop proclaimed that on

New Year's Day all the lords and barons of the land should come to London for a Tournament; and he trusted that God would make known to them on that day the one that should win the sword.

On New Year's Day there rode to the Tournament Sir Ector with his son Kay that had been made a knight by Uther, and his foster-son Arthur. So as they rode Kay found that he had left his sword at his home and he asked young Arthur to ride back for it. This Arthur did in all haste, but when he was come home he could not find the sword, so he said to himself, "I will ride to the churchyard and draw the sword that sticketh in the anvil, for my brother Kay must not be without a sword this Tournament day."

When he was come to the churchyard Arthur descended from his horse and went to where the sword was covered by a tent. He found that the knights had ridden to the Tournament, so he put his hand to the sword and drew it easily from

the anvil, and then rode in all haste to his brother. When Kay saw the sword he was amazed and rode fast to Sir Ector and said, "Lo, I must be King, for I have the sword that was in the anvil."

"Tell me how ye came by the sword," said Sir Ector. Then Kay told his father how Arthur had drawn the sword. "Sir," said Ector to Arthur, "ye must rightwise be King of England."

"Why say ye so?" said Arthur.

"For this cause," said Ector, "never man might have drawn this sword save he that is to be King." Then Ector bade Arthur put back the sword and draw it out for him, and this Arthur did easily. After this Sir Ector and Sir Kay tried to draw the sword, but might not move it; then they kneeled before Arthur and he said to Ector, "Why kneel ye to me, my father?"

"Nay," said Ector, "I am not your father, ye are the son of Uther Pendragon." And Ector told Arthur of how Merlin's desire had been fulfilled.

Then he bade Arthur come with him to the Archbishop, and there, afore all the lords and barons of the land, Arthur pulled the sword from the anvil again and again. But the lords were wroth and declared that this youth should not rule them.

So the Archbishop bade all come to London at Candlemas, and at that time also Arthur drew the sword, yet were the lords and barons not willing to have him King.

Then came they again at Easter time, and so put it off till Pentecost, when once more all tried to draw the sword, but only Arthur might move it.

At last the lords cried out and said, "We will have Arthur for our King; we will not delay longer, for we see that God ordains that he shall rule us."

So they all knelt afore him and begged his forgiveness that they had kept him waiting so long. At this, Merlin told them all how Arthur was the son of Uther Pendragon, and there was great rejoicing.

Arthur took the sword in both his hands

and offered it upon the altar where the Archbishop was, and then was he made a knight. Anon was he crowned King of England and swore to rule with justice all the days of his life.

II

HOW KING ARTHUR RECEIVED EXCALIBUR FROM THE LADY OF THE LAKE

It befell soon after Arthur was crowned that he fought a mighty battle with a king named Pellinore and so was wounded. But Merlin brought him to a hermit to be healed, and so he remained there three days and then rode forth with Merlin. And as they rode the King said, "Sir, I have no sword." "Soon ye shall have one," said Merlin, "for hereby is a sword that shall be yours."

So they rode till they came to a fair lake,

and in the midst of the lake Arthur was ware of an arm clothed in white samite that held a fair sword in the hand. "Lo," said Merlin, "yonder is the sword that I spoke of." Then they espied how there came toward them by the lake a damosel and King Arthur asked who she was.

"That is the Lady of the Lake," said Merlin, "and within the lake is a rock, and therein is as fair a place as any on earth. This damosel will come to you, so speak ye fair to her and she will give you that sword."

Anon came the damosel unto Arthur and saluted him and he her again. "Damosel," said Arthur, "what sword is it that the arm yonder holdeth above the water? I would it were mine, for I have no sword."

"Sir Arthur, King," said the damosel, "that sword is mine, and if ye will give me a gift whensoever I shall ask it of you, ye shall have the sword."

"By my faith," said Arthur, "I will give you what gift ye shall ask."

"Well," said the damosel, "go ye into

yonder barge and row yourself to the sword and take it and the scabbard with you, and I will ask my gift when I see my time."

So King Arthur and Merlin tied their horses to a tree and they went into the barge and so rowed out, and when they came to the sword Arthur took it, and the arm and the hand went under the water.

Then Merlin warned Arthur that he must never let the scabbard of the sword go, as it was worth ten of the sword, for it was enchanted and never could Arthur be wounded if he had with him the scabbard.

And the name of the sword was Excalibur, which is to say Cut-steel.

Now the adventures which came by this sword were many and some were sorrowful.

III

HOW KING ARTHUR WEDDED GUINEVERE, AND OF THE ROUND TABLE AND THE SIEGE PERILOUS

On a day it came to pass that King Arthur went to Merlin and said, "My barons would have me take a wife, but I will choose none save by thy counsel and advice."

"It is well that ye take a wife," said Merlin, "for a man of your noblesse should not be without one. Now is there any lady you love more than other?"

"Yea," said King Arthur, "I love Guin-

evere, daughter of King Leodogrance, of the country of Cameliard, he that holdeth the Round Table you made for my father Uther Pendragon. When I was in the King's realm to help him from his enemies, there saw I Guinevere and loved her; and I count her the fairest of all the ladies I know or could find."

"Sir," said Merlin, "she is one of the fairest, and if your heart is set I will not seek to turn you, for where a man's heart is set there will he follow."

"That is truth," said King Arthur.

So at his command Merlin set out for the country of Cameliard to ask King Leodogrance for his daughter Guinevere for Arthur's Queen.

When King Leodogrance heard Merlin's message he said: "This is to me the best tidings that ever I heard, that so worthy a king desires to wed my daughter. A noble gift I shall send to him. I would give him of my lands but of lands he hath many, so I shall send him a gift that will please him

more, for I shall send him the Round Table which his father Uther Pendragon gave to me. When all its places are occupied there are one hundred and forty knights to sit at it; but I have only one hundred knights to send King Arthur, so many of the knights of my realm have been slain."

With gladness King Leodogrance delivered Guinevere to Merlin, with the Round Table and the hundred knights, and they set out for Camelot, and journeyed by land and water till they came to London. When Arthur heard of the coming of Guinevere he made great joy and said, "This lady is very welcome, for I have loved her long; and the gift of these knights and the Round Table pleases me more than great riches." So in all haste the King ordered that the marriage feast and coronation be made ready with all the honor that could be devised.

The Round Table was brought to Camelot and placed in the great Hall of Arthur's Castle; then the King bade Merlin search through the land to find for him forty more

knights, that the Round Table might be full. So Merlin searched, and could find eight and twenty only. Then the Archbishop came from London and blessed the seats, and on this day Merlin wrote letters of gold on each seat to say which knight sat therein. Then he spoke so that all could hear, and said: "Round I made this Table like the world, that none might sit high or low there, but all equal; and this I call the Third Table of the World. At the First Table sat Jesus with his disciples at the Last Supper. At the Second Table sat Joseph of Arimathea with his followers in Avalon, and at the Third Table sits King Arthur with his knights that shall be called the Knights of the Round Table."

At this time there came to Arthur his nephew Gawain, and begged of him that he would make him a knight on the day of his marriage. This Arthur granted him right willingly. Then was the marriage feast ready and King Arthur and Guinevere were wedded with all solemnity, in St. Stephen's

Church in London, and there was Guinevere crowned Queen.

When all had returned to Camelot, Gawain was made a knight and after him a King named Pellinore and his son Tor. Merlin had found other knights and all the places at the Table were filled save three. Now on one of these Merlin had carved strange and beautiful figures and he called it the Siege Perilous.

"Sir," said Arthur to Merlin, "for what cause are these seats empty, and why have ye so named this seat at my left?"

"For this cause," said Merlin: "these seats are for knights that shall be the worthiest of your Court, but the Siege Perilous is for the Best Knight of the World; and he that essays to sit therein, save he for whom the seat is destined, shall be destroyed."

Soon there came to sit in the seat next to the Siege Perilous Percivale, and next after him to occupy the other seat Launcelot of the Lake. Now Launcelot had been stolen

from his mother when he was a baby, by the Lady of the Lake. She loved young Launcelot passing well and would have kept him always with her; but when it was time she brought him to where King Arthur was passing through the woods with his knights and begged him to make the youth a knight. This Arthur was pleased to do. For many years Launcelot was the best knight of the Court, and he was ever ready to serve the King and follow the bidding of the Queen.

And the King established his knights and gave those that were not rich lands, and he charged them never to wrong rich or poor and always to be true; never to be cruel, but to show mercy to all that asked it; to serve their King evermore; to succor all ladies, damosels and gentlewomen. Also to take no battle in a wrongful quarrel or for world's goods. Unto this were all the knights of the Table Round sworn, both old and young. And every year were they sworn at the high feast of Pentecost.

Now in this book, all the adventures of

King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table will not be found; these must be read in that noble book *Le Morte D'Arthur*. But herein may be read the adventures of Sir Galahad, called the Best Knight of the World, and it is with the sorrowful story of Balin that these adventures rightfully begin.

"And a Knight shall come that shall have a head of gold, the look of a lion, a heart of steel; conditions without wickedness, the valor of a man, and faith and belief in God. And he shall be the Best Knight in the World."

CO. SCHOOLS
1156219

IV

HOW THE LADY OF THE LAKE ASKED A GIFT OF KING ARTHUR

THERE rode one day into the Court of King Arthur a damosel that bore at her side a noble sword, and she told the King that she desired to be delivered of it, for it weighed her heavily down; but no knight could draw it save one that was full of every goodness. Straightway the King essayed to draw the sword and many of the knights after him, but none could move it. "I deemed that my knights were the best in

the land," said Arthur, "but this adventure must be for some other."

So as the damosel was turning sorrowfully away, she was met by a knight in exceeding poor dress and he besought her, saying, "Damosel, I pray you by your courtesy to suffer me to essay as these knights have; for though I am poorly clothed my heart is true."

Now this knight was called Balin le Savage and he was brother to the knight Balan, both of the country of Northumberland and of Arthur's Court. On this day he had been released from prison where he had been held by Arthur for slaying a knight of the Court. Balin desired greatly to achieve the adventure of the sword, and the damosel, seeing that he was a true knight, bade him essay, and easily Balin drew out the sword.

Then said the damosel to him, "Gentle and courteous knight, I pray you give me the sword again."

"Nay," said Balin, "this sword I desire

to keep, and will not let it go save it be taken from me by force."

"Well," said the damosel, "ye are not wise to keep it, for it shall be your destruction, and with it ye shall slay the man ye love best in all the world."

"Whatever adventure comes," said Balin, "I will take it, but I will not let the sword go now."

"Alas!" said the damosel, "I am full of sorrow for your sake," and she saluted all and rode upon her way. After this Balin carried the sword with his own and he was called the Knight of the Two Swords.

Now as Balin was making ready to depart from Arthur's Court, there came riding into Camelot the Lady of the Lake. She saluted the King and asked him for the gift he had promised her when she gave him Excalibur.

"Ask what ye will," said the King, "and ye shall have it an it lie in my power to give it."

"Well," said the Lady of the Lake, "I

ask the head of the knight that hath won the sword, or else the damosel's head that brought it, and it would please me to have both their heads; for this knight slew my brother and this gentlewoman caused my father's death."

"Truly," said King Arthur, "I may not grant either of their heads, therefore ask what else ye will and I shall fulfil your desire."

"I will ask none other thing," said the Lady.

Now as Balin was about to ride forth he saw the Lady of the Lake afore the King, and straightway came he toward her. He had sought her for three years, for by her enchantments she had slain his mother. When he heard that she asked his head of King Arthur he stood afore her and said, "Ye would have my head, and therefore ye shall lose yours." And with his sword Balin lightly smote off her head.

"Alas, for shame!" said King Arthur, "why have ye done so? Ye have shamed

me and all my Court, for this was a lady I was beholden to, and hither she came under my safe-conduct; I shall not easily forgive this trespass."

"Sir," said Balin, "I fear not your displeasure, for this lady was the untruest lady living, and by enchantment and sorcery she hath been the destroyer of many good knights, and she was causer that my mother was burnt, through her falsehood and treachery."

"What cause soever ye had," said Arthur, "ye should have forborne to do this; never did one so shameful a deed here, therefore go ye out of my Court in all haste."

Then Balin took up the head of the lady and bore it away to be buried, and so rode out from Camelot. And he bade his squire that rode with him to journey into Northumberland and tell his friends that his foe was dead, also how he was out of prison. So when they had departed Balin rode fast to reach the place where King Rience dwelled, for he was about to make war upon

King Arthur, and Balin hoped to overcome King Rience and so win back the love of his King.

Anon came Merlin before King Arthur, and when he heard of the deed of Balin he said: "This same damosel that brought the sword into your Court would have done great wrong, for she sought a knight that would slay her brother. By enchantment the Lady of the Lake ordained that this should be by the drawing of the sword, and also she let no man move the sword but Balin, that she might harm him. But when the damosel saw how hardy and true was this knight she repented her, and would have saved him from the evil the Lady of the Lake desired to bring upon him. But he shall be destroyed, and great pity is it, for his strength and valor none may surpass and he shall do you great honor."

Meanwhile Balin rode on, but his journey was delayed by sad adventures. Soon there overtook him a knight of Arthur's Court, called Lanceor that thought to please the

King by fighting with Balin and so revenge the wrong he had done. But Balin overcame Lanceor, and killed him. Then there came riding by a lady on a fair palfrey, and when she espied how Lanceor lay dead she made great sorrow and said, "O Balin, two bodies have ye slain and two hearts." And for love of the knight she fell upon his sword and so destroyed herself.

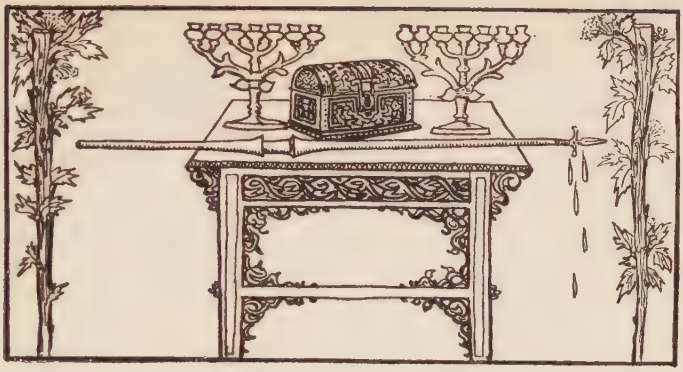
When Balin saw that she was dead he was filled with sorrow and repented him sore of the death of this knight, because of the true love that had been between him and the lady. So as he stood there he was aware, by the arms, of his brother Balan coming toward him, and they put off their helms and kissed each other and wept for joy. Then Balin told his brother how he had been released from prison and of the sorrowful adventures that had overtaken him. Straightway the two set out to reach King Rience, but they had not gone far upon their way afore they met with Merlin and he said to Balin: "Thou shalt strike a stroke

the most dolorous that ever man struck except the stroke to our Lord, for thou shalt hurt the truest knight and the man of most worship that now liveth, and through that stroke three kingdoms shall be in great poverty, misery, and wretchedness for twelve years and the knight shall not be whole of that wound for many years."

"How shall that be?" said Balin. "An I thought I should do such a shameful deed as that I would slay myself now."

Merlin rode on with the brothers and by his help they took King Rience prisoner and brought him to Arthur. Now many had told the King of these two knights that had accomplished this valorous deed and how one of them carried two swords. So when they were come afore King Arthur he saw that he was beholden to Balin and Balan for this service and he there forgave Balin.

Soon after this the King had a mighty battle with twelve powerful kings, and ever the two brothers served him and their deeds were marvellous to behold.



V

HOW BALIN SMOTE THE DOLOROUS STROKE THAT WOUNDED KING PELLAM

Now after the mighty battle with the twelve kings, when Balin of the Two Swords and his brother Balan won for themselves such renown, Balin was led into adventure by a damosel that besought him to revenge her on a knight named Garlon that had slain one she loved. So Balin and the damosel rode forth to seek Garlon, and the lady carried with her the truncheon of the sword with which Garlon had slain her lover. As

they rode they met with strange adventure, for as they passed a Castle knights rode out and surrounded the damosel and took her into the Castle. Then Balin went up into a tower by the Castle gate and so leaped over the walls into a ditch, and rose up without harm and would have fought the knights, but they bade him put up his sword for they would not fight with him—they desired only that the custom of the Castle might be obeyed. And they told Balin how the lady of the Castle had lain sick many years and might not be healed till she was touched with a dish of blood from a maiden's arm. When they had heard this the damosel and Balin consented to the custom, but the blood of the damosel helped not the lady and she was not healed till many years after, as the story telleth later.

That night Balin and the damosel rested in the Castle and on the morrow rode upon their journey. On the way they lodged with a good knight that complained to them of the wickedness of Garlon, for he

had wounded his son and he thought he should never be whole till this Garlon was slain. Then he told Balin that King Pellam was brother to Garlon, and he was about to hold a great feast in the country of Listenaise and each knight was bidden to the feast and commanded to bring his wife or his lady, and Garlon would be there. Straightway Balin promised his host that he would revenge him on Garlon, and they two and the damosel journeyed fifteen days and so came to King Pellam's Castle on the day the great feast began. So they alit and stabled their horses and went toward the Castle, but Balin's host might not be let in, as he had no lady. But Balin was well received and brought to a chamber and unarmed, and there were brought him robes to put on. And those that served him asked him to leave his swords behind him, but Balin left only one.

As he entered the great hall where all the knights and ladies were assembled, he espied Garlon, and as that knight saw Balin

looking at him he came forward and smote him on the cheek and said, "Knight, what would ye with me?"

Straightway Balin smote Garlon and killed him, and took the truncheon from the damosel's hands and thrust it in Garlon's body, and he said aloud, "With that truncheon thou hast slain a good knight and now it sticketh in thy body." As he spoke his host appeared at the door and Balin cried out to him, "Now shall your son be healed."

Therewith all the knights rose up and would have driven Balin out, but King Pellam cried, "Knight, ye have slain my brother, wherefore no other man shall fight with you but myself, for love of my brother." And he caught in his hand a weapon and smote eagerly at Balin; but Balin put his sword betwixt his head and the stroke and therewith his sword burst in sunder. So he ran into a room to find another weapon; and so ran from room to room and always King Pellam after him. At the last he

entered where was a bed richly arrayed in cloth of gold; and near by stood a table of silver that four silver pillars bare up, and upon this table beside a chest was a spear standing upright.

When Balin saw this spear he took it in his hand and turned to King Pellam and smote him with it, and therewith the King fell down in a swoon. At this, part of the walls of the room brake and Balin fell down and might not move hand or foot, nor could any in the Castle reach him. So they lay until the morning, when Merlin came and found them. He gave Balin his other sword and got him a horse and bade him ride fast out of the country. But King Pellam lay many years wounded, and might not be healed till Galahad came to him.

As Balin rode away from the Castle he found fair countries laid waste, and people slain on every side. And many people stopped him and said: "O Balin, ye have caused great damage in these countries and

great sorrow by the dolorous stroke ye gave King Pellam; yet doubt not but that vengeance will fall on you at the last." When Balin heard this he was filled with great sorrow and went with heaviness upon his way.

Anon he came into a fair valley where he met a knight that had need of his service, and when he had rescued him from his danger he rode on till he reached a castle where he hoped to rest, but an old man came out and warned him that dangerous adventure awaited him. Ladies also came out to greet him and they told him that on an island near by was a knight that no one might pass till he had fought with him.

"That is an unhappy custom," said Balin, "for I am full weary, yet will not I avoid it." The ladies then offered Balin a shield for the fight which was larger than his; this he put on and set out to reach the island. But there came a lady to him that said: "O Knight Balin, why have ye left your own shield? Alas, ye have put your-

self in great danger, for by your shield ye would have been known. Great pity is it to see so hardy a knight pass to such perilous adventure."

"I repent me greatly that ever I came into this country," said Balin, "but now I may not turn me again for shame. So what adventure befalleth me, that will I take, be it life or death." Then Balin looked to his arms that they were secure and so rode on to reach the island.

VI

OF THE SORROWFUL DEATH OF BALIN AND BALAN AND OF BALIN'S SWORD

When Balin reached the island there came riding toward him across the bridge a knight all trapped in red, and this was his brother Balan. And when Balan saw his two swords he thought it was Balin, but because of his shield he deemed it was not. The two knights came marvellously fast together and smote with their spears each the other on his shield, and this brought the horses to the ground. Then up rose

the knights and fought on foot till each wounded the other so grievously that soon the fight was over, and they lay as if dead upon the field.

Then said Balin: "What knight are ye? Never have I found a knight that matched me afore."

"My name," said the other, "is Balan, brother to the good knight Balin of Arthur's Court."

"Alas," said Balin, "that I should see this day!" As he said this he fell back in a swoon, and Balan put off the helm of his brother and saw his face; and at this Balin awoke and said, "O Balan my brother, ye will have slain me and I you, wherefore all the world shall speak of us both."

"Alas," said Balan, "that ever we saw this day! For reason that I killed a knight that lived on the island, I have been held a prisoner here and made to fight with every knight that passed by. Your two swords I espied, but by cause of your shield I knew you not."

Soon came out to them the ladies of the castle, and all wept for pity when they heard the sorrowful story of the fight. Balin then besought them that they would bury him with his brother, and the ladies gave their promise. Anon Balan died and after him Balin, and both were buried in one tomb as they desired. Balan's name the ladies wrote on the tomb and made mention of how the two brothers had met their death, but Balin's name they knew not. The next day Merlin came, and he wrote letters of gold on the tomb which said, "Here lieth Balin le Savage, Knight of the Two Swords and he that smote the dolorous stroke." Then Merlin took off the pommel of Balin's sword to set on another pommel, and he bade a knight that stood near to handle the sword. The knight essayed, but might not move it; and Merlin laughed.

"Why laugh ye?" said the knight.

"For this cause," said Merlin—"there shall never man handle this sword but the Best Knight of the World. He shall be

son to Sir Launcelot and his name shall be called Galahad."

Merlin next made a bridge of iron and steel to reach the island, that was but half a foot broad; and he said, "There shall never man pass over this bridge but he is a worthy man and a good knight." The scabbard of Balin's sword Merlin placed on the island, for he knew that one day Galahad would cross the bridge to find it. Also he took a great marble stone and by magic made it stand upright on the water; then he wrote letters of gold on Balin's sword and stuck it into the marble stone. This stone moved always upon the water for many years, till by adventure it went down the stream to Camelot, as the story telleth later.

When Merlin had achieved all these things, he went to King Arthur and told him of the dolorous stroke that Balin had given King Pellam; of how Balin and Balan had fought together and

of how they were both buried in one tomb.

"Alas!" said King Arthur, "this is the greatest pity that such disaster should have befallen two such brave knights."

VII

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT CAME TO THE CASTLE OF THE SANGREAL, AND OF THE BIRTH OF GALAHAD

Now some time after the death of Balin, there came one day into the Court of King Arthur a hermit and saw all the knights seated at the Round Table. But when he saw the empty seat he asked the King why that seat was void, and the King answered him and said, "This is called the Siege Perilous, for never shall man sit there save the one it is destined for and any other that would essay to sit there shall he destroyed."

Then said the hermit, "Wot ye who this knight is or when he shall come to the Court?"

"Nay," said King Arthur, "we wot not who shall sit therein."

"Then will I tell you," said the hermit: "he that shall sit here is not yet born, but this same year shall his birth be, and one day he shall sit in this Siege Perilous and he shall achieve the Quest of the Sangreal."

When the hermit had spoken thus he left the Court, and King Arthur and the knights marvelled at these tidings and all waited to hear of this promised knight that should soon be born in the land.

At this time it was Whitsuntide, and when the feast was over Sir Launcelot du Lake rode out from Camelot to seek adventure, and so on a day he came to a Castle that had the fairest tower that ever he saw. There also was a fair town and people came to him and cried, "Welcome, Sir Launcelot du Lake, the flower of all knight-

hood, for by thee we shall be holpen out of danger."

"What mean ye?" said Sir Launcelot.

"Ah, fair knight," said they, "there is within this tower a dolorous lady that hath been there in pain many winters and none may heal her. Hither came Sir Gawain but this adventure he might not achieve and we think it is Sir Launcelot that shall deliver her." Then they brought Sir Launcelot to the tower and he found it full hot there, for the poor lady lay in boiling water. This had been wrought by enchantment by Queen Morgan le Fay, sister to King Arthur, for she was deemed the fairest lady in the land and the Queen would have destroyed her. But it was said she should be healed if the best knight in the world should take her by the hand. So Launcelot at the bidding of the people reached out his hand to the lady and immediately the water cooled and she rose, well from her pain. And when she was clothed all in rich garments, Sir Launcelot found her more fair

than any lady save Queen Guinevere. Then all went to the chapel to render thanks to God for this deliverance and all came to Launcelot to give their thankings for his service. And they said to him, "Sir, sithen ye have delivered this lady, we pray you deliver us from a dragon there is near the Castle in a tomb."

So Launcelot took his shield and said to them, "Take me thither and I trust I may fulfil your desire with the help of God."

When they came to the tomb, Launcelot saw written there letters of gold which said: "There shall come one strong as a leopard to slay this dragon, and to this knight shall be born one that shall be as strong as a lion and he shall pass all other knights."

Then Sir Launcelot lifted up the stone at the tomb and therewith came out a great dragon spitting fire out of his mouth. And Sir Launcelot drew his sword and fought with the dragon long and at last slew him. So as he was resting there came to him a man robed in a King's garment and he

saluted Sir Launcelot and said, "Fair knight, I came to thank you for the adventures ye have achieved in this Castle and wit ye, my name is Pelles, King of this country and descended from Joseph of Arimathea." So each made much of the other and then went they to the Castle to take their repast.

Anon as they were seated, there came a dove in at a window, and in her mouth was a little censer of gold, and sweet savor filled the room, and all manner of meats and drinks appeared on the table. Then came in a damosel passing fair and young, and she bare a vessel of gold preciously covered betwixt her hands. And King Pelles and Sir Launcelot kneeled down devoutly.

"Sir King," said Sir Launcelot, "what may this mean?"

"This is," said the King, "the greatest marvel man ever saw, for this is the Sangreal, and when this shall appear at Camelot the Round Table shall be dissevered for many a day."

So knelt they there and joy filled Sir Launcelot's heart that he had beheld this sweet mystery. Anon the maiden went from the room with the Sangreal, and the dove flew out of the window. Therewith King Pelles revealed to Launcelot the wonders of the Castle which was called Carbonek.

Now Launcelot tarried many days with King Pelles, and each had joy of the other, and it pleased King Pelles well to have Sir Launcelot there, for Merlin had said that Launcelot, and Elaine the daughter of King Pelles, should have a child and this should be he that was to sit in the Siege Perilous and achieve the Sangreal.

According to the saying of Merlin so was it done, for within the year there was born to the Lady Elaine a fair child and she had him christened Galahad, for so was Launcelot named afore the Lady of the Lake confirmed him Launcelot du Lake. And

Elaine's joy was great, for well she knew that her son should achieve greater adventures than any other knight and know sweet mysteries that none other in the world should know.

VIII

HOW SIR BORS CAME TO THE CASTLE OF THE SANGREAL AND SAW THE CHILD GALAHAD

Now there was a knight that was named Bromel la Pleche, the which was a great lord, and he had loved the Lady Elaine long and ever more desired to wed her. But she desired to be rid of him, so one day she said to him: "Wit ye well, Sir Knight, I will never love you, for my love is set on the best knight of the world."

"And who is he?" said Sir Bromel.

"Sir," said Elaine, "ye shall hear; this knight is Sir Launcelot du Lake and him I love; he is my knight ever more and none other, therefore woo me no more."

"Since ye have told me this," said Sir Bromel, "I shall see Sir Launcelot and slay him for I have no love for him."

"Sir," said Elaine, "do him no treason, for he is a true knight and father to my child Galahad, and he that wrongs him will meet with punishment."

"Well, my Lady," said Sir Bromel, "I shall abide outside this Castle and wait for Sir Launcelot and fight with him when he comes here again."

It befell some time after this that Sir Bors de Ganis, a cousin to Sir Launcelot, rode out from Camelot to seek adventure and came to the Castle of Carbonek and so rode over the bridge and heard from Sir Bromel why he tarried there. And Sir Bors and Sir Bromel jousted together and Sir Bors smote Sir Bromel such a buffet that he fell from his horse. But as a hardy knight

would, he drew his sword and dressed his shield to do battle with Sir Bors.

Then Sir Bors alit and they dashed together many sad strokes, till Sir Bromel was laid to the earth, and Sir Bors would have slain him but the other cried for mercy and he yielded. "I shall save you your life," said Sir Bors, "if ye promise to go to Sir Launcelot and yield you to him as a knight recreant."

"That will I do," said Sir Bromel. And this he swore upon the cross hilt of his sword. So Sir Bors let him depart and then he rode into the Castle, and when King Pelles and Elaine wist that he was nephew to Sir Launcelot they made him great cheer.

Now Sir Bors looked long upon the fair child Elaine held in her arms, and he knelt before them, and the baby Galahad stretched out his hand to touch the shining sword-hilt. Then said Elaine to Sir Bors, "We marvel where Sir Launcelot is, for he hath not been here this long while."

"Marvel not," said Sir Bors, "for this

half-year he hath been imprisoned by Queen Morgan le Fay, King Arthur's sister, and we know not when she will release him."

"Alas!" said Dame Elaine, "I am filled with sorrow at these tidings, for this child is mine and Launcelot's." Therewith Sir Bors wept for joy and prayed to God that the child might prove as good a knight as his father, and he found him passing like Sir Launcelot.

So as they conversed together, there came suddenly into the room a white dove that bare a little gold censer in its mouth, and soon entered a maiden clothed all in white that bear the Sangreal. And she spoke and said: "Wit ye well, Sir Bors, that this child is called Galahad, and this is he that shall sit in the Siege Perilous and behold the Sangreal as none other may. And he shall be a much better knight than his father Sir Launcelot."

Then they that heard these words made with all reverence their prayers, and a sweet savor filled the room, as if flowers and

spicery were there, and all manner of sweet foods was given them. Then the dove took its flight and the maiden vanished with the Sangreal.

"Sir," then said Bors unto King Pelles, "this Castle may be named the Castle Adventurous, for here be many strange things."

"Yes," said King Pelles, "ye say true; this is an adventurous place and only true knights shall win worship here, so tarry not if ye be not a strong and worthy knight."

"I fear not to take whatever adventure shall come," said Sir Bors. And he tarried that night in the Castle and fair and marvellous were the adventures that came to him, for there saw he again the Sangreal and there heard he of its mysteries. On the morrow he returned to Camelot and told the King and Queen and all the knights of the wonders of the Castle, and how he had seen the child Galahad that was Sir Launcelot's son. When Launcelot had returned to Camelot the King questioned him,

but that knight said, "Sir King, all this shall be known openly when it is time."

Now, at the desire of King Pelles, Galahad was taken from his mother at an early age and given into the keeping of nuns, and with them he lived until he was more than fifteen winters old. And on a day at this time when Sir Launcelot was at King Pelles' Castle, Elaine said to him, "Sir Launcelot, at this year's feast of Pentecost shall Galahad, your son and mine, be made a knight."

"Truly that will be well," said Launcelot, "God give him grace to be a good knight."

"As for that," said Dame Elaine, "I doubt not he shall prove the best man of his kin, for he shall be called the Best Knight of the World and he shall achieve the fairest adventures of any knight in the world."

"These are joyful tidings," said Launcelot unto Elaine, "and it will please me well when this fair youth shall come to Camelot."

IX

OF HOW GALAHAD WAS MADE A KNIGHT

At the vigil of the feast of Pentecost, when all the fellowship of the Round Table were come unto Camelot and there heard service, and the tables were laid ready for the meat, right so there entered into the Hall on horseback a fair gentlewoman that had ridden full fast, for her horse was all besweated. Then she alit and came before King Arthur and saluted him and he said: "Damosel, God bless thee."

"Sir," said she, "will ye say me where Sir Launcelot is?"

"Yonder ye may see him," said the King.

Then the gentlewoman went unto Sir Launcelot and said: "Sir Launcelot, I salute you on King Pelles' behalf, and I require you to come with me into a forest hereby."

Then Sir Launcelot asked her with whom she dwelled. "Ye shall know," said she, "when ye come thither." So Sir Launcelot bade his squire saddle his horse and bring his arms and in all haste he did his commandment.

Then came the Queen unto Sir Launcelot and said: "Will ye leave us at this high feast?"

"Madam," said the gentlewoman, "wit ye well, he shall be with you to-morrow morn."

"If I wist," said the Queen, "that he should not be with us to-morrow morn, he should not go with you by my good will."

Right so departed Sir Launcelot with the

gentlewoman, and they rode until they came into a great valley where was an Abbey of nuns. There was a squire ready that opened the gates, so they entered and descended off their horses, and there came out a fair fellowship to Sir Launcelot and welcomed him, and they were passing glad of his coming. Then they led him to the Abbess' chamber to unarm him, and so was he aware, lying on the bed, of two of his cousins, Sir Bors and Sir Lionel. So he waked them and when they saw him they made great joy.

"Sir," said Sir Bors, "what adventure hath brought you hither, we weened tomorrow to have found you at Camelot?"

"I wot not," said Sir Launcelot, "a gentlewoman brought me thither but said not the cause."

"Nor wherefore we came wot we," said the two knights.

In the meanwhile, as they thus stood talking together, therein came twelve nuns, and with them came a youth the which was

passing fair and well made and in the world men might not have found his match. And the nuns about him wept. Then the Abbess took the youth by the hand and brought him unto Sir Launcelot and she said: "Sir, we bring you here Galahad, whom we have cared for since a child, and we pray you to make him a knight, for we deem of a worthier man's hand he may not receive the order of knighthood."

Then Sir Launcelot beheld with joy his son and saw him seemly, with all manner of good features; and he weened never to have seen so fair a youth of his age. And because of the humility he saw in him he was well pleased to make him a knight. So he said: "Cometh this desire of himself?"

And Galahad and all the nuns said: "Yea."

"Then shall he," said Sir Launcelot, "receive the high order of knighthood to-morrow at the reverence of the high feast." Then said he to Galahad: "Go ye

now and watch your arms in the Chapel and to-morrow at the hour of prime I will come and make you a knight."

That night Sir Launcelot had passing good cheer, and on the morn at Galahad's desire he made him a knight and said: "God make you a good man, for of beauty ye have more than any man that liveth."

"Now, fair Sir," said Sir Launcelot, "will ye come with us to the Court of King Arthur?"

"Nay," said Galahad, "I will not go with you at this time."

Then the nuns said they would send Galahad when it was time. So Sir Launcelot, Sir Bors, and Sir Lionel departed from the Abbey.

X

HOW LETTERS WERE FOUND WRITTEN IN THE SIEGE PERILOUS AND OF THE MARVELLOUS ADVENTURE OF THE SWORD

The three knights rode until they came unto Camelot. There they went into the Minster to hear the service, for the King and Queen and all the fellowship were assembled there. And all were right glad to see the three knights among them again.

So when they were all come from service into the Hall of Camelot, they espied how

the sieges at the Round Table were all written with golden letters which said where each knight ought to sit. And when they came to Siege Perilous, there they found letters newly written in gold which said: "FOUR HUNDRED WINTERS AND FOUR AND FIFTY AFTER THE DEATH OF OUR LORD, OUGHT THIS SIEGE TO BE FULFILLED."

Then all said: "This is a marvellous thing and an adventurous!"

"It seemeth me," said Sir Launcelot, "that this Siege ought to be fulfilled this same day, for this is the feast of Pentecost, four hundred and four and fifty years; and if it would please all, I would that none of these letters were seen this day, till he be come that shall achieve this adventure."

Then made they a covering of silk to hide the letters in the Siege Perilous; and when this was done the King bade haste unto dinner.

"Sir," said Sir Kay the steward, "if ye go unto your meat ye shall break the old

custom of your Court, for ye have not ever this day sat at your meat till ye have seen some adventure."

"Ye say truly," said the King, "but I had so great joy of Sir Launcelot and his cousins which are come to the Court, whole and sound, that I bethought me not of mine old custom."

So as they stood speaking, in came a squire and said to the King: "Sir, I bring you marvellous tidings."

"What be they?" said the King.

"Sir," said the squire, "there is here at the river, a great stone which I saw floating on the water, and therein I saw sticking a sword."

"We will see the marvel," said the King. So he and all the knights went down to the river; and when they were come there, they found a stone, as it were of marble; and therein stuck a fair, rich sword, and in the pommel thereof were precious stones wrought with letters which said, "NEVER SHALL MAN TAKE ME HENCE,

BUT ONLY HE BY WHOSE SIDE I OUGHT TO HANG, AND HE SHALL BE THE BEST KNIGHT OF THE WORLD."

When the King had seen the letters he said unto Sir Launcelot: "Fair Sir, this sword should be yours, for I am sure ye be the best knight of the world."

Then Sir Launcelot answered full soberly: "Certes Sir, this sword is not for me; also Sir, wit ye well, I have no hardiness to set my hand thereto, for it longeth not to hang by my side. Also, who essayeth to take this sword and faileth of it, he shall be in danger to receive a wound from it that he shall not be whole of long after. Now wit ye well Sir, there shall be other marvels this day, for this same day shall the adventures of the Sangreal begin."

"Now fair nephew," said the King unto Sir Gawain, "essay ye to draw the sword."

"Sir," said Gawain, "spare me that, by your good grace."

"Sir," said the King, "essay ye to take the sword and at my commandment."

"Sir," said Gawain, "your commandment will I obey." And therewith he took up the sword by the handle, but he might not stir it.

"I thank ye," said the King.

"Sir Gawain," said Sir Launcelot, "now wit ye well this sword shall touch you so sore that ye shall wish ye had never set your hand thereto, even for the best castle of the realm."

"Sir," said Gawain, "I might not withsay my uncle's commandment."

Then the King bade that Sir Percivale should essay and that knight said, "Gladly, for to bear Sir Gawain fellowship." Therewith he set his hand to the sword, but he might not move it, and after him were there more that durst be so hardy as to set their hands thereto.

"Now ye may go to dinner," said Sir Kay unto the King, "for a marvellous adventure have ye seen."

So the King and all the fellowship went unto the Hall of Camelot, and every knight knew his own place and sat therein; and the young squires served them.

The Departure of the Knights

XI

HOW THE OLD MAN BROUGHT GALAHAD TO THE SIEGE PERILOUS

ANON when they were all served, and all the sieges fulfilled save only the Siege Perilous, there befell a marvellous adventure, for all the doors and windows were suddenly shut, yet the Hall was not greatly darkened. Then King Arthur spake and said, "Fair fellows, we have this day seen marvels, but I suppose we shall now see greater marvels."

Therewith came into the Hall an old

man clothed all in white and there was none knew whence he came. And with him he brought a young knight, in red arms without sword or shield, but with a scabbard hanging by his side.

And these words the old man said:

"Sir King, I bring here a young knight, who is of King's lineage and of the kindred of Joseph of Arimathea, and by him marvels of this Court and of strange realms shall be accomplished."

The King was passing glad of his words and said to the good man, "Sir, ye be right welcome and the young knight with you."

Then the old man bade the young man unarm and put upon him a mantle furred with ermine that he carried upon his shoulder. And he said, "Sir, follow me."

And anon he led him to the Siege Perilous, beside which sat Sir Launcelot. And the good man lifted up the cloth upon it and found there new letters that said thus: "THIS IS THE SIEGE OF

GALAHAD. "Sir," said the old man, "wit ye well, this place is yours."

Therewith the young knight sat down surely in the Siege and then he said to the old man: "Sir, ye may now go your way, for well have ye done what ye were commanded to do. Recommend me, I pray you, to my sire King Pelles and unto my Lord Pellam, and say to them on my behalf that I shall come and see them as soon as ever I may."

So the good man departed; and at the door there met him twenty noble squires and all took their horses and went their way. Then all the knights of the Round Table marvelled greatly of Sir Galahad that he durst sit in the Siege Perilous, being so young of age; and they said: "We wot not from whence he came save by God, for there never sat one before him but misfortune befell him. And surely this is he by whom the Sangreal shall be achieved."

Now when Sir Launcelot beheld his own son he was filled with joy; and many of the

knights went and told the Queen of the marvellous adventure and how like was the young knight to Sir Launcelot. And the Queen said: "I well suppose that this is the son of Launcelot and Elaine, King Pelles' daughter, and his name is Galahad. I would fain see him, for he must needs be a noble youth."

And when the King passed by the Siege Perilous, he lifted up the cloth and found there the name of Galahad; and then he shewed it to Sir Gawain and said, "Fair nephew, now have we among us Sir Galahad, the good knight that shall bring worship to us all, and he shall achieve the Sangreal."

Then said King Arthur unto Galahad, "Sir, ye be welcome, for ye shall move many knights to the quest of the Sangreal and ye shall achieve what never other knights might bring to pass."

Then the King took Sir Galahad by the hand and went down to the river to show him the adventure of the sword in the stone.

XII

HOW SIR GALAHAD DREW BALIN'S SWORD OUT OF THE STONE

Now tidings came to the Queen and ladies of this marvel and all came and saw the stone upon the water.

"Sir," said King Arthur to Galahad, "here is a great marvel as ever I saw and right good knights have essayed here and failed."

"Sir," said Sir Galahad, "this adventure is not theirs but mine; and for the surety of this sword I brought none with me and here by my side hangeth its scabbard."

Therewith as he spoke, Sir Galahad laid his hand to the sword and lightly drew it from the stone and put it in its sheath. Then he said to all: "Now have I that sword that was one time the good knight's Balin le Savage; and with this sword he slew his brother Balan, and that was great pity, for both were passing good knights. And Balin gave unto King Pellam a dolorous stroke and he lies wounded in the Castle of Carbonek, nor shall he be whole till I go to him. But there are adventures I must first achieve and this sword will serve me well; now lack I nought but a shield."

"Sir Galahad," said King Arthur, "doubt not, a shield God will send you."

Therewith, as they were talking, all espied how there came riding toward them by the river side a fair lady on a white palfrey. She saluted the King and Queen and asked if Sir Launcelot was there, at which that knight answered for himself and said, "Lady, I am here."

Then said the lady, all with weeping,

"How your great name is changed this day!"

"Damosel, why say ye so?" said Sir Launcelot.

"I say ye sooth," said the damosel, "for ye were till this day the best knight of the world, but who should say so now should not speak truth; for there is now one better than you, and well it is proved by the adventure of the sword whereto ye durst not set your hand; wherefore ye shall not from henceforth be the best knight of the world."

"As concerning that," said Sir Launcelot, "I know well I was never the best."

"Yea," said the damosel, "that were ye, and are yet of all other knights, save only one."

Then the lady spoke to the King and said: "Sir King, Nacien the Hermit sendeth you word that there shall befall you the greatest worship that ever befell king in Britain; and I say to you, therefore, that this day shall the Sangreal appear in your

house and feed you and all your fellowship of the Round Table."

So saying, the lady departed and went the same way she had come.

XIII

OF THE TOURNAMENT OF FAREWELL

"Sirs," said King Arthur, "I am sure at this quest of the Sangreal all ye of the Table Round shall depart and never shall I see you again all together here; therefore I would see you all together on the meadow of Camelot to joust and to tourney, that after your death men may speak of it that such good knights were of such great prowess."

So, at the King's counsel and request all the knights accorded, and took on their

harness for the jousting. And this request of the King's was also for to see Galahad proved; for the King deemed he should not come again unto the Court after his departing. So all the fellowship assembled on the meadow for the Tournament. And Sir Galahad by request of the King put on him a noble jesseraunce; and also he put on his helm, but shield would he take none. And then Sir Gawain and the other knights prayed him to take a spear, and right so he did.

Then Sir Galahad dressed him in the middle of the meadow and began to break spears marvellously and all men had wonder of him; for he there surpassed all other knights, and within a while he had unhorsed all the good knights of the Table Round, save twain, and these were Sir Launcelot and Sir Percivale.

Then when the Tournament was at an end, the Queen made request of Galahad that he alight and unlace his helm that she might see him clearly.

"Truly," said she, "Sir Launcelot is your father, for never two men resembled each other more, and it is no marvel ye be of such prowess, for ye be of the highest lineage; and ye and Sir Launcelot be two of the greatest gentlemen of the world."

XIV

OF THE MARVELLOUS APPEARANCE OF THE SANGREAL AT CAMELOT AND OF THE VOW OF THE KNIGHTS

When all the fellowship of the Round Table were returned unto Camelot all went to the Minster to hear service and after that to supper in the Hall. Anon as every knight sat in his own place there came suddenly a cracking and crying of thunder so great that all thought the Castle would be driven to. Then the blast ceased and there entered into the Hall a sunbeam more clear

by seven times than is the day and it lit all the faces of the knights so that each beheld the other fairer than ever before and not one was there might speak but they looked every man on the other as if they had been dumb.

In the midst of this sunbeam there appeared in the Hall, the Sangreal covered with white samite; but there was none might see it nor who bare it. And the Hall was filled with sweet odors as if all the spicery of the world had been there, and joy was in the hearts of the knights, and every knight had such meats and drinks as he best liked.

When the Sangreal had been borne through the Hall it departed suddenly and none knew where. Therewith had they all breath to speak and straightway the King rose and yielded thanks to God for the great blessings He had sent them. "We ought to thank God greatly," said he, "for what He hath shewed us this day on this high feast of Pentecost."

Then up rose Sir Gawain and spoke so that all heard and said: "Sir King, we have this day been fed with such meats and drinks as we desired and great comfort has come to us; but one thing beguiled us, we might not see the Sangreal, so preciously was it covered. Wherefore I will make a vow that to-morrow morn without longer abiding I shall go forth in the quest of the Sangreal and I shall hold out a twelvemonth and a day and more if need be, and never shall I return to the Court till I have seen the Sangreal more openly, unless I find I am a knight not worthy enough."

Now when the others of the Round Table heard Sir Gawain, they arose up all and made such avows as he had made, and as King Arthur heard he was sore displeased, for he well knew that the quest was not for all. "Alas," said he to Gawain, "ye have well nigh slain me with the avow ye have made, for through you I shall be bereft of the fairest fellowship and the truest knighthood that was ever seen together in

any realm of the world." And as he said these words tears filled the King's eyes.

"Sir," said Sir Launcelot, "comfort yourself; this quest shall bring us to great honor."

"Ah, Launcelot," said King Arthur, "the great love that I have for you all maketh me to say such doleful words, for I am sure that when they depart from my Court many I shall never see again and it is a heavy sorrow to have them depart."

When the Queen and the ladies of the Court heard the tidings of the quest they had such sorrow as tongue might not tell, for those knights had held them in all honor and charity. But among all Queen Guinevere made greatest sorrow. "I marvel that my lord would suffer the knights to depart from him," said she.

Thus was all the Court troubled at the departure of the knights.

XV

OF HOW THE KNIGHTS DEPARTED FROM CAMELOT

Now, many of those ladies that loved knights would have gone with them; and so would they have done, had not an old man in religious clothing come among them and said: "Fair Sirs who have sworn in the quest of the Sangreal, thus sendeth you word Nacien the Hermit, that none in this quest may lead lady or gentlewoman with him, for this is not to be in the high service you shall labor in. And I warn you plain, he that is not clean of his sins, he shall not see the mysteries of the Sangreal."

Then, after the good man had departed, all the knights went to rest them and in honor of his high life, Galahad was led to King Arthur's chamber and rested on the King's own bed.

So, when it was day the King arose, for he had no rest all the night for sorrow; and he came and found Sir Launcelot and Gawain and many other of the knights, and all commanded their squires to bring their arms. So when all the fellowship were armed save their shields and helms, they went to the Minster to hear service. Then after the service was done, the King asked how many had undertaken the quest and they found that one hundred and fifty were there.

So all put on their helms and set out to depart, and there was weeping and great sorrow. And the Queen went unto her chamber so that none might perceive her weeping, but when Sir Launcelot missed her he came unto her, and when she saw him she cried out: "O Sir Launcelot, how can ye leave thus my lord?"

"Ah, Madam," said Sir Launcelot, "I pray you be not displeased, for I shall come again unto the Court, as soon as ever I may."

"Great pity is it," said the Queen, "that ye must go, but may God conduct you and all the fellowship in safety."

Right so departed Sir Launcelot and found the fellowship abiding his coming. So they all rode through the streets of Camelot, and there was weeping of rich and poor and the King turned away his head and might not look after them for sorrow.

And the knights rode on till they came unto a city and unto a Castle that was called Vagon. There they entered in and the lord of the Castle who was a good old man, set wide the gates, and made them all the good cheer that he might.

So on the morrow, the knights were all accorded that they should depart each from other; and so they set out with cheer, and each knight took the way that he best liked.

XVI

OF THE ADVENTURE OF THE WHITE SHIELD

Now rideth Sir Galahad yet without shield, and so he rode four days without any adventure. And at the fourth day after evensong, he came to an Abbey called the White Abbey and there he was received with great reverence and was led to a chamber to unarm him. Also he found there two knights of the Round Table, King Bagdemagus and Sir Uwaine. "Sirs," said Sir Galahad, "what adventure brought you thither?"

"Sir," said King Bagdemagus, "it is told us that within this place is a shield that no man may bear about his neck, save he be wounded or dead within three days, but I shall essay this strange adventure to-morrow, and shall bear the shield. But an I fail in this adventure, ye shall take it upon ye, for I am sure ye would not fail."

"Sir," said Galahad, "I agree right well thereto, for I have no shield."

So on the morn when they had heard service, King Bagdemagus asked where the adventurous shield was. Anon a monk led him behind an altar, where the shield hung, white as any snow, save in the middle there was a red cross.

"Sirs," said the monk, "this shield ought not to be hanged about any knight's neck, but he be the worthiest knight of the world; therefore I warn you knights of this adventure."

"Well," said King Bagdemagus, "I wot well that I am not the best knight of the world, but yet shall I essay to bear this

shield." Then said he unto Galahad: "If it will please you, I pray you abide here till ye know how I speed."

"I shall abide you here," said Sir Galahad.

Then King Bagdemagus took the shield and bare it out of the monastery, and with him he took a squire, the which should bring tidings unto Sir Galahad how he sped.

When they had ridden a two mile, they came unto a fair valley afore an hermitage and they saw a goodly knight come out to them and he had on white armor, horse and all. And he came as fast as his horse might run, with his spear ready, and King Bagdemagus dressed his spear against him and brake it against the white knight; but that knight struck him so hard that he brake King Bagdemagus' armor and thrust him through the right shoulder, for the shield covered him not there at the time. And so he bare him from his horse and alighted and took the shield from him saying: "Knight, thou hast

done thyself great folly, for this shield ought not to be borne but by him that shall have no peer."

Then came he to King Bagdemagus' squire and said: "Bear this shield unto the good knight, Sir Galahad, that thou left in the Abbey, and greet him for me and wish him well."

"Sir," said the squire, "what is your name?"

"Take thou no heed of my name," said the knight, "for it is not for thee to know, nor for any earthly man."

"Now fair Sir," said the squire, "I pray you tell me for what cause this shield may not be borne, but the bearer be mischiefed thereof."

"Well, sithen thou asketh me I will tell thee," said the white knight, "it is for reason that this shield belongeth unto Sir Galahad only."

Then the squire went unto King Bagdemagus and asked whether he were sore wounded or not. "Yea, that am I," said

he, "and I shall escape hard from death."

So the squire fetched his horse and brought him with great pain unto an Abbey. There was he taken down from his horse and unarmed, and laid in bed, and then were his wounds looked to. And King Bagdemagus lay there long and escaped hard with his life.

XVII

HOW SIR GALAHAD HEARD THE STORY OF THE WHITE SHIELD

THEN rode the squire in all haste till he came again unto the White Abbey and there found Sir Galahad and said to him: "Sir, the knight that wounded King Bagdemagus sendeth you greeting and bids you bear this shield wherethrough great adventures have befallen."

"Now blessed be God for this good fortune," said Sir Galahad. Right so he asked for his arms and mounted upon his horse and hung the white shield about his

neck. Therewith Sir Uwaine said he would bear him fellowship if it pleased him.

"Sir," said Sir Galahad, "that may ye not, for I must go alone save for this squire that shall bear me fellowship."

Then departed Sir Uwaine and went his way; and so Sir Galahad commended all to God and rode forth from the White Abbey with the squire.

Within a while they came to where the White Knight abode by the hermitage and each saluted the other courteously.

"Sir," said Galahad, "by this shield were many marvels achieved?"

"Yea, Sir," said the White Knight, "and thou shalt hear of them. It befell after the death of our Lord, forty-two years, that Joseph of Arimathea, the gentle knight, departed from Jerusalem with a great party of his kindred and so journeyed till they came to a city that was called Sarras. And at that time there was a king who was named Evelake that had war with a Saracen, Tholme la Feintes; and Joseph of Arima-

thea, went to King Evelake and told him he should be overcome and slain if he left not the old belief and believed in the new law. So he then showed King Evelake the new belief and the King agreed to it with his whole heart.

Then Joseph made a shield for the King that was white, marked in the centre with a red Cross, and this he carried into battle. Before the shield was a cloth and when Evelake was in peril he put away the cloth and his enemies fled at sight of the Cross upon it. But a marvel befell, for after a time the Cross vanished away from the shield and no man wist where it went.

"Soon Joseph left Sarras and came to this land which was then called Britain, and there he found the country in the possession of a heathen that put Joseph and his companions into prison, but Mordrains, for so was Evelake called after he was baptized, came and delivered him and after this all the people of the land were turned to the Christian faith.

"Now, not long after, Joseph was near to death and when King Mordrains saw this he made much sorrow and said: 'For love of you have I left my country and sithen ye shall depart out of this world, leave me some token of yours that I may think of you.'

"And Joseph said: 'That will I do full gladly, so bring me your shield that I gave you when ye went into battle with King Tholme.' Therewith Joseph marked upon the shield with his own blood, a cross.

"'Now,' said he, 'ye may see a remembrance that I love you, for ye shall never see this shield but ye shall think of me and it shall be always as fresh as it is now. And never shall man bear this shield around his neck but he shall repent it, unto that time that Galahad, the Best Knight of the World, shall bear it about his neck, and he shall do marvellous deeds.'

"'Now, Sir,' said Mordrains, 'tell me, I pray you, where shall I put this shield that the worthy knight may have it?'

"'Ye shall leave it with Nacien the Hermit,' said Joseph, 'and it shall remain there after his death and his Abbey shall be called the White Abbey; thither shall the good knight come after he has received the order of knighthood and there shall he win the shield.'

"Ye see, Sir," said the White Knight to Galahad, "all has befallen as Joseph of Arimathea said, and now the shield is yours." Therewith as he spoke these words, the White Knight vanished away.

XVIII

OF THE MARVEL OF THE TOMB AND HOW MELIAS WAS MADE A KNIGHT

When the White Knight had departed the squire alit off his horse and kneeled down at Galahad's feet and prayed him that he might go with him till he had made him a knight.

"I think not," said Galahad, "that I can refuse you."

"Then will ye make me a knight?" said the squire, "and by the grace of God I will not disgrace that order."

So Sir Galahad promised Melias and they went into the hermitage and there great joy was made of their coming. Anon as they alit there came a monk that bade Sir Galahad follow him and he led him unto a tomb that was in the churchyard. Therewith as they stood beside the tomb, they heard such a noise as to verily nigh drive them mad or make them lose their strength.

"We deem it is a fiend," said the monk.

"I well suppose that is so," said Galahad, "now lead me thither." So they did and he was all armed save his helmet.

"Go into the tomb," said the monk, "and lift it up." So Sir Galahad did and they heard a voice that piteously cried and said: "Sir Galahad, true servant of God, come thou not nigh me, or thou wilt go where I have been so long." But Galahad was nothing afraid, and went and lifted up the stone. Therewith come out the foulest smoke and the foulest figure leapt out that

was ever in the likeness of a man. Then a voice spoke that said: "Galahad, I see about thee so many angels that my power may not harm thee."

Then when the smoke had cleared away, the noise ceased and they saw lying in the tomb a body all armed, and beside him was a sword.

"Now, fair brother," said Sir Galahad, "let us remove this body for it is not worthy to lie in this churchyard, and this must have been a false man."

Therewith when this was done they went unto the hermitage, and there Galahad rested that night; and on the morn when he made the squire a knight, he asked him for his name and of what kindred he came.

"Sir," said Melias, "men call me Melias de Lisle and I am son of the King of Denmark."

"Now, fair Sir," said Galahad, "since ye are come of kings and queens, look ye that knighthood be well set in you, for ye ought to be a mirror unto all chivalry."

"Sir," said Melias, "ye say well. And since ye have made me a knight, ye must grant me my first desire that is reasonable."

"That will I do," said Galahad.

Then Melias said, "Suffer me to ride with you in this quest of the Sangreal till some adventure part us."

"I grant you that, Sir," said Galahad. Then men brought Melias armor and his spear and his horse; and so Sir Galahad and he rode forth. And all that week they rode ere they found any adventure. Then it befell that as they were departing from an Abbey, they came to a cross which went two ways and on that cross were letters that said:

"NOW YE KNIGHT ERRANT WHO GOETH TO SEEK ADVENTURE, SEE HERE TWO WAYS: THE ONE WAY TO THE RIGHT YE SHALL NOT GET OUT OF UNLESS YE BE A GOOD MAN AND A WORTHY KNIGHT; AND IF YE GO ON THE LEFT HAND YE SHALL NOT LIGHTLY WIN

PROWESS, FOR ON THAT WAY YE SHALL BE SOON ESSAYED."

"Sir," said Melias to Galahad, "if it please you to suffer me to take this way on the left hand, tell me, for there might I well prove my strength."

"It were better," said Sir Galahad, "ye rode not that way, for I deem I should better escape in that way than you."

"Nay, fair Sir, I pray you let me have this adventure," said Melias.

"Take it then," said Galahad, "in God's name."

Therewith Melias departed that way and Sir Galahad rode onward.

XIX

OF THE ADVENTURE THAT MELIAS HAD AND HOW SIR GALAHAD REVENGED HIM

Soon Melias came into an old forest and there he rode two days and more, till he came to a fair meadow where was a lodge of boughs and therein he espied a chair whereon was a crown of gold subtly wrought; also there were cloths upon the earth and many delicious meats set thereon. So Melias beheld this adventure and thought it marvellous, but

he had no hunger; yet the crown of gold he would have, so he stooped down and took it up and rode his way with it. Anon he saw a knight come riding after him who said, "Knight, set down that crown, it is not yours, so defend you."

Then Sir Melias said, "Fair Father, help Thy new-made knight."

Right so the two let their horses run as fast as they might, and the knight smote Melias through his left side and he fell to the earth nigh dead. Then the knight took the crown and went his way, but Sir Melias lay still and had no power to stir.

Anon it befell that by good fortune, there came Sir Galahad and found Melias there in peril of death, and he said, "Oh, Melias, who hath wounded you? It would have been better had ye ridden the other way."

When Sir Melias heard Galahad speak he said, "For God's love, let me not die in

the forest, but bear me unto the Abbey near here."

"That shall be done," said Sir Galahad, "but where is he that hath wounded you?" With that Sir Galahad heard in the leaves one cry, "Knight, keep ye from me."

"Ah, Sir," said Melias, "beware, for that is he that hath wounded me."

Then Sir Galahad said, "Sir Knight, come out on your peril." At this out came the knight and the two met together as fast as their horses might run, and Galahad smote the knight down from his horse and in the falling Galahad's spear brake. With that, came out another knight from the leaves and brake a spear upon Galahad ere he might turn. Then Galahad drew out his sword and smote off the knight's left arm and with that the knight fled and Sir Galahad pursued fast after him.

Anon he turned again unto Sir Melias and there alit and lifted him softly on his horse afore him and held him in his arms and so

brought him to the Abbey and laid him in a bed.

So when prayers had been made, Sir Galahad drew the truncheon of the spear from Melias' body and therewith he swooned. Then there came in a good old man that said to Galahad, "Sir, I shall heal this knight of his wounds, by the grace of God, within a term of seven weeks."

Then was Galahad glad and unarmed him, and said he would abide there three days. Anon when he saw that Melias would be healed, he said to the good man, "Now would I depart, for I have much on hand; for many good knights are busy now in the quest of the Sangreal, and this knight and I are in the quest."

"Sir," said the good man, "this knight was wounded because he was not deemed worthy to ride this way yet and because he sinned when he took the gold crown. No one may ride this way that comes not to achieve God's works."

So as Galahad would depart, Melias said

to him, "Sir, I will ride after you as soon as ever I may."

"God send you your health," said Sir Galahad. So he commended all to God and took his horse and rode away.

XX

HOW SIR GALAHAD CAME TO THE CASTLE OF THE MAIDENS AND DESTROYED THE WICKED CUSTOMS THEREIN

MANY journeys rode Sir Galahad backwards and forwards as adventure would lead him.

One night he came unto a mountain where he found an old chapel, and saw no one there, and he kneeled before the altar and besought God for wholesome counsel. So as he prayed he heard a

voice that said, "Go thou now, thou adventurous knight, to the Castle of the Maidens and there do away with the wicked customs."

When Sir Galahad heard this he thanked God and took his horse and he had not ridden but half a mile when he saw in a valley afore him, a strong castle with deep ditches, and there he met a man of great age, and either saluted other; and Galahad asked him the name of the castle.

"Fair Sir," said he, "it is the Castle of the Maidens."

"That is a cursed Castle," said Galahad, "and all they that be the cause; for all pity has gone from them and all hardiness and mischief is in them."

"Therefore," said the good man, "I counsel you, Sir Knight, to turn again."

"Sir," said Galahad, "wit ye well, I shall not turn again." Then looked Sir Galahad on his arms that nothing failed him, and so he put his shield afore him and rode on.

Anon there met him seven fair maidens,

Sir Galahad Overthrows Launcelot and Percivale

who said unto him, "Sir Knight, ye arrive here in great folly, for ye have the water to pass over."

"Why should I not pass the water?" said Galahad. So rode he away from them and met with a squire that said, "Knight, those knights in the Castle defy you: go no further till they wit what ye would."

"Fair Sir," said Galahad, "I come to destroy the wicked custom of this Castle."

"An ye abide by that," said the squire, "ye will have enough to do."

"Go ye now," said Galahad, "and haste my needs." So the squire entered into the Castle and told the knights that one was come to destroy them.

Anon there came out of the Castle, seven knights and all were brethren, and when they saw Galahad they cried, "Knight, guard you, for we assure you nothing but death."

"Why," said Galahad, "will ye all have ado with me at once?"

"Yea," said they, "of that be ye sure."

Then Sir Galahad put forth his spear and smote the foremost to the earth and he near broke his neck. Therewith the others smote him on his shield great strokes, so that their spears brake. Then Sir Galahad drew out his sword and set upon them so hard that it was a marvel to see it, and so through great force he made them forsake the fight. But Galahad chased them till they entered into the Castle and so passed through the Castle by another gate. There Sir Galahad met an old man in religious clothing, that stretched out his hands to him and said, "Sir, take ye these keys of the Castle." So Galahad opened the gates and therewith he saw more maidens than he could number and they all said to him, "Sir, ye be welcome, for long have we abided our deliverance."

Then came to Sir Galahad a gentlewoman and said, "Sir, these knights be fled, but they will come again and here begin again their evil custom."

"What will ye that I do?" said Galahad.

"Sir," said the gentlewoman, "I would that ye send after all the knights that hold lands of this Castle and make them swear to use the customs as they were used heretofore."

"I will do as ye say," said Galahad. Then the gentlewoman took an horn of ivory bounden richly with gold, and she said, "Sir, blow this horn, which will be heard two mile about this Castle." When Galahad had blown the horn, he set him down to rest. Anon there came a good man to him that said, "Sir, ye shall hear the story of the wicked custom of this Castle."

"It is seven year that these seven brethren came here and harbored with the lord of this Castle that was named Duke Lianour, and he was lord of all this country. And when they espied the Duke's eldest daughter that was a full fair gentlewoman, then they wished to take the maiden and the treasure of the Castle. So the Duke they slew and his son, and by

great force they held all the knights of this Castle against their will, and none of the knights in the country might save them; and these wicked knights robbed the poor of all they had. Then it befell that on a day, the Duke's daughter said, 'Ye have done unto me great wrong to slay my father and my brother and thus to hold our lands; but ye shall not hold this Castle for many years, for by one knight that will come shall ye be overcome.' Thus she prophesied seven years agone.

"'Well,' said the seven knights, 'sithen ye say so, there shall never lady nor knight pass this Castle but they shall be imprisoned or suffer death.'

"Therefore, Sir, was this Castle called the Maidens' Castle, for these knights have imprisoned many maidens."

"Now," said Sir Galahad, "is she here for whom this Castle was lost?"

"Nay, Sir," said the good man, "she hath died within these three days, and these

knights keep her younger sister and many ladies here that endure great suffering."

By this time all the knights of the country came, and Sir Galahad made them do homage and swear fealty to the Duke's daughter. So he set all the ladies in great ease of heart and released them all. That night Sir Galahad rested at the Castle of the Maidens and on the morn there came one to Sir Galahad that told him how Sir Gawain, Sir Gareth, and Sir Uwaine had met with the seven brethren and slain them.

"That is well," said Sir Galahad. So he took his armor and his horse and commended all unto God and so rode away.

XXI

HOW SIR GALAHAD MET WITH SIR LAUNCELOT AND SIR PERCIVALE

When Sir Galahad was departed from the Castle of the Maidens, he rode till he came to a waste forest and there he met with Sir Launcelot and Sir Percivale. But they knew him not for he was disguised, for his helmet was down and his shield was covered. Right so Sir Launcelot his father dressed his spear and brake it upon Sir Galahad but that knight smote him so that he caused horse and rider to fall to the earth. Then he drew his sword and went

to Sir Percivale and smote him on the helm and rove it through and with the blow Sir Percivale fell from his saddle. Now all this was done afore an hermitage where a recluse dwelled, and when she saw Sir Galahad ride by, she said: "God be with thee, Best Knight of the World; had yon two knights known thee then would they not have encountered thee."

Right so when Sir Galahad heard her speak he rode away from them at a great pace for he would not be known, as he liked not having overthrown these knights.

When the two knights perceived that it was Galahad, they gat upon their horses and rode fast after him; but in a while he was out of their sight. Then they returned again with sorrow.

"Let us ask some tidings," said Sir Percivale, "of yonder recluse."

"Do as ye will," said Sir Launcelot, "but I shall ride on to find Sir Galahad." So on he rode till he came into a great forest and there many adventures befell

him. There was he sore wounded and knights found him and brought him to King Pelles' Castle where he was healed by the Sangreal.

So when Sir Launcelot had ridden away, Sir Percivale turned unto the recluse and he kneeled at her window, and she opened it and asked him what he would.

"Madam," said he, "I am a knight of King Arthur's Court, and my name is Percivale de Galis."

Then the recluse made great joy of him and told him she was his aunt. So she commanded the gates to be opened and great cheer was given him, and there he rested for the night. Then on the morn, Sir Percivale asked tidings of the knight with the white shield. "Sir," said she, "why wouldst thou hear of him?"

"Truly, Madam," said Sir Percivale, "I would fight with him for he left me so lightly that I am full of shame."

"Ah, Percivale," said his aunt, "thou mayest not overcome this knight. And I

have other tidings for thee; when heardest thou from thy mother?"

"Truly," said he, "I heard not of her this long time, but I dream of her much in my sleep and I know not if she be dead or living."

"Well, fair nephew," said the recluse, "thy mother is dead; for after thy departing from her, she took such sorrow that anon she died."

"Alas," said Percivale, "this grieveth me sore."

Then made he ready to leave the recluse and he said: "Fair aunt, tell me how I shall find this knight who bore the red arms at the feast of Pentecost?"

"Otherwise," said she, "ought he not to go save in red arms; and this same knight shall have no peer, for he worketh all by miracle and he shall never be overcome by earthly man's hands."

"Now, Madam," said Percivale, "I will never have ado with Sir Galahad but by way of kindness; but show me, fair aunt,

how I may find him for I would love his fellowship greatly."

"Fair nephew," said the recluse, "thou must ride unto a castle that is called Goothe where thou must lodge for the night; for there is a cousin of Sir Galahad's that may give thee tidings of him. But if he can give thee no word, then ride thou straight to the Castle of Carbonek, where the Maimed King is lying, and then thou shalt hear true tidings of him."

Then Sir Percivale asked for a blessing from his aunt and departed from her and rode fast to find Sir Galahad.

The Golden Girdle

XXII

HOW SIR PERCIVALE CAME UNTO A MONASTERY WHERE HE FOUND KING MORDRAINS

So rode Sir Percivale till evensong. Then he heard a clock strike and he was ware of an old house closed well with walls and deep ditches; and there he knocked at the gate and was let in, and he alit and was led unto a chamber and soon he was unarmed. All that night he had right good cheer and on the morn he heard service. So saw he on the right side of the altar, a

pew closed with iron and in it a rich bed, covered with a cloth of silk and gold. Then Sir Percivale espied some one therein, but he could not say if it was man or woman for the face was covered. So it befell that the figure uncovered and Sir Percivale saw an old man that had a crown of gold on his head and on his body he saw wounds.

Anon this old man spoke and said: "Fair Father, forget not me." Then was the Lord's Cup brought to him and he partook of it and after this he lay down and made his prayers. Therewith Sir Percivale asked one of the brethren of the house who the old man was, and he told him that this was King Mordrains and so he told Percivale the story of how the King had been stricken.

Then they heard the King cry out and say: "Fair Father, let me never die till the good knight is come that shall achieve the Sangreal, that I may see him openly and kiss him."

"Sir," said the good man, "this King hath lived these four hundred winters this

holy life, and men say that the knight that is to heal him is in the Court. Now I pray you tell me what knight ye be, and if ye be of King Arthur's Court and of the Round Table?"

"Yea, forsooth," said Sir Percivale, and he told the good man his name. Then had they all great joy of him. Anon Sir Percivale departed from the monastery and rode till the hour of noon.

XXIII

HOW SIR GALAHAD RESCUED SIR PERCIVALE AND OF PERCIVALE'S ADVENTURES IN A FOREST

THEN Sir Percivale met in a valley about twenty men of arms that bare in a bier a knight that had been slain. And when they saw Sir Percivale they asked him of whence he was, and he answered, "Of the Court of King Arthur."

Then they all cried at once, "Slay him." Right so Sir Percivale smote the first to the earth and his horse. Therewith seven of

the knights smote upon his shield all at once, and the others slew his horse so that he fell to the earth. Then would they have slain Sir Percivale or taken him, had not Sir Galahad come there by adventure. And when he saw all those knights fighting with one knight, he cried, "Save me that knight's life."

So he rode toward the twenty men of arms as fast as his horse might go and he smote the foremost to the earth. Then when his spear was broken, he set his hand to his sword, and smote on the right hand and on the left, so that it was a marvel to see. And at every stroke he smote one down or put him to flight, so that soon they would fight no more, but fled to a thick forest, and Sir Galahad followed them. Then when Sir Percivale saw him chase them so, he made great sorrow that his horse was away, and he wist well that it was Sir Galahad. So he cried aloud, "Ah, fair Knight, abide and suffer me to give thanks unto you, for much have ye done for me."

But ever Sir Galahad rode so fast that soon he passed out of his sight, and as fast as ever he might, Sir Percivale went after him on foot.

Then met he with a yeoman riding upon an hackney who led a great steed blacker than any bear. "Ah, fair friend," said Percivale, "I will be a true knight to you and do whatsoever ye will require of me, if ye will lend me that black steed that I may overtake a knight that rideth on afore me."

"Sir," said the yeoman, "I pray ye hold me excused of that, for that I may not do; for wit ye well, the horse is another man's, an I lend it to you, then would he slay me."

"Alas," said Sir Percivale, "I had never so great sorrow as I have had for losing yonder knight."

"Sir," said the yeoman, "I am full of sorrow for you, for a good horse is your need; yet I dare not deliver you this horse, but take him from me if ye will."

"Nay," said Sir Percivale, "that will I

not do." So the two parted and Sir Percivale set him down under a tree and made great sorrow.

Anon the yeoman returned and said that a knight had stolen his black horse and he desired Percivale to take his hackney and ride after the knight. So Percivale did, and found him, but the knight smote the hackney to the earth and rode away. Then Sir Percivale was wroth and cried, "Abide, wicked knight; coward and false-hearted knight, turn again and fight with me on foot." But he answered not, and passed on his way. When Percivale saw he would not turn, he cast away his helm and sword and said, "Now am I a most unhappy knight." So he continued in this sorrow till it was night, then he laid him down and slept.

Then when he awaked he saw afore him a woman that said right fiercely, "Sir Percivale, what dost thou here?"

"I do neither good nor ill."

Then the woman said: "If thou wilt grant me thy service when I shall summon thee,

I will lend thee mine own horse which shall bear thee whither thou wilt." Sir Percivale was glad of her proffer and said he would fulfil her desire at any time. So she brought him her horse that was black and great and well apparelled, and Percivale leapt upon him and rode away through the forest and the moon shone clear. And within an hour or less the horse had borne him what seemed to be four days' journey and then they came to a rough water and the horse would have gone into it. But Percivale doubted to pass it and he made the sign of the cross on his forehead. At this the horse shook Percivale from him and went into the water and made a great sound, and the water appeared to burn. Then Percivale knew that he had been saved from a fiend and he thanked God for it, and prayed that he might withstand all temptations. So he prayed till the morn and he then saw that he was in a wild mountain the which was closed about with the sea, and wild beasts were

therein. Then came he into a valley and there he saw a serpent bring a young lion by the neck, and he came toward Percivale. With that there came a great lion roaring after the serpent, and anon the lion had overtaken the serpent and began battle with him. Then Sir Percivale thought to help the lion, for he was the more natural beast of the two, and therewith he drew his sword and set his shield before him; and then he gave the serpent such a buffet that it received a deadly wound. When the lion saw that, he made no semblance to fight with Percivale, but crouched before him, and when Percivale perceived this, he cast down his shield which was broken. Then did he off his helm, for the fight with the serpent had wearied him. So the lion fawned upon him like a spaniel and Percivale stroked him on the neck and shoulders and he thanked God for the fellowship of the beast. Then the lion took his little whelp and bare him where he came from, and Percivale was alone again. And he prayed God that he

might endure as a true champion in His service. Anon while he prayed, he saw the lion come toward him, and it lay down at his feet. So all that night the lion and he slept there together.

And Percivale dreamed that two ladies came to him; one, who rode on a lion, warned him of a great danger; the other, riding on a serpent, said that Percivale had slain her serpent, and that to make amends he must serve her.

As Percivale awoke, he saw a ship, and in it was an old man who gave him counsel. When he had departed, another ship appeared, and in it Percivale saw a lady, and she told him that she would lead him to the Red Knight. Now this lady would have made Percivale forget his quest, but by God's grace he saw the cross on his sword and he made the sign of the cross. At this, the lady ran to her ship, and Percivale thanked God for his deliverance. Anon came the old man again and bade Percivale enter the ship; then he disappeared and the ship was carried out to sea.

Galahad Meets with his Father

XXIV

HOW SIR GALAHAD FOUGHT AT A TOURNAMENT

Now when he had rescued Percivale from the twenty knights, Galahad came unto a waste forest wherein he rode many journeys; and he found many adventures that he brought to an end. Then he took his way to the sea, and it befell as he passed by a Castle that there was a great tournament. And Sir Galahad perceived that they without had done so much, that they within were put to the worst; yet were they good knights enough. So when Galahad saw

that those within were in so great a mischief that they were overthrown, then he thought to help them. And he rode full fast and put forth his spear and smote the first so he fell to the earth, and his spear brake to pieces. Therewith he drew his sword and smote all around him and he did such deeds that all marvelled.

Now it befell that Sir Gawain and Sir Ector de Maris were with the knights without and when they espied the white shield with the red cross, the one said to the other: "Yonder is the good knight, Sir Galahad, now he would be a foolish man who would meet with him to fight."

Right so Sir Galahad came up to Sir Gawain and he smote him so hard that he clave his helm unto his head and Sir Gawain fell to the earth; and the stroke was so great that it slanted down to the earth and carved the horse's shoulder in two. Then when Ector saw Gawain down he drew him aside and thought it no wisdom for him to abide there.

Thus Sir Galahad through his great hardiness beat back all the knights about him and then they within came and chased them all so that they fled. So when Galahad saw that none would turn again, he stole away and none wist where he had gone.

"Now by my head," said Gawain to Ector, "are the wonders true that were said by Launcelot du Lake, that the sword which stuck in the stone should give me such a buffet that I would not have it for the best castle in the world. Now is this true, for never had I such a stroke from a man's hand."

"Sir," said Ector, "it seemeth me your quest is ended."

"But yours is not," said Gawain, "go ye on, but I shall seek no farther."

Then Sir Gawain was borne into a castle and unarmed and laid in a rich bed. Then was a leech brought to him; so was it found that he should live and be whole within a month. So Ector abode with Gawain for

he would not go away from him till he was whole.

And the good knight Galahad rode until he came to a hermitage where he desired to tarry for the night and the good man of the hermitage was well pleased to see that he was a knight from King Arthur's Court. So it befell as Galahad was at rest, there came a gentlewoman knocking at the door and called to Galahad; and the good man came to the door to see what she would. Then she called to the good man and said: "Sir Ulfin, I am a gentlewoman that would speak with the knight that is with you."

Therewith the good man awaked Sir Galahad and said to him: "Arise, Sir Knight, and speak with a gentlewoman that hath great need of you." So Sir Galahad went to her and asked her what she would.

"Sir Galahad," said she, "I would that ye arm, and mount upon your horse and follow me, for I shall show you the highest adventure within these three days that ever any knight saw."

Anon Sir Galahad armed him and took his horse, and bade the gentlewoman go, and he would follow where she liked.

XXV

HOW SIR GALAHAD CAME TO A SHIP AND FOUND THEREIN SIR BORS AND SIR PERCIVALE

So Sir Galahad and the gentlewoman rode as fast as their horses might carry them till they came near the sea that is called Collibe. And so they rode along the way all the day without having either meat or drink; and in the evening they came to a fair Castle, strengthened with a wall and moats and running water. And when those of the Castle saw them coming, they went

to meet them and they said: "God's welcome to thee, Lady." And they greeted her as though she were a lady over them.

Then the gentlewoman commanded them to receive the knight with welcome. "No better knight than this," said she, "ever bare arms." So all received the knight with joy and unarmed him. Then Sir Galahad asked the lady if they should remain in the Castle for the night. "No, fair Sir," said the gentlewoman, "when we have eaten a little and slept we will depart hence." Then to eat they went and to sleep. So after they had slept, the lady desired the knight to rise and torches of wax were brought that he might don his arms. And when they were ready they mounted their horses and the lady took with her a golden casket with precious stones worked into it and she placed it between her and the pommel of her saddle. Then they set out from the Castle and rode till they came to the sea.

Therewith they beheld a ship and Sir

Galahad saw therein Sir Bors and Sir Percivale, and they said: "Sir Galahad, ye be welcome; we have abiden you long."

So each welcomed the other and the two knights greeted the lady.

Then came Sir Galahad and the gentlewoman into the barge and all thanked God that they were brought together. So they were sailing until the day and the wind blew them along at a marvellous pace.

Anon each related his adventures, and Sir Bors told Sir Galahad that he had found Sir Percivale in the ship and had journeyed with him; and ever had they prayed to meet with Sir Galahad.

"Here should I not have come," said Sir Galahad, "but for this damosel; for never was I before on that road and I should not have thought of finding you in a place as foreign as this."

"Sir," said Bors unto Galahad, "if your father Launcelot were here, nothing would be wanting to make us happy." So the

three knights conversed until it was the hour of noon.

Then they came to land and to a desolate isle between two rocks that were passing great, and then they saw another ship. And the damosel said to them, "Sirs, in yonder ship is the adventure on account of which God hath caused you to come together, and for that reason we must go from this ship into the other."

"We will do that," said the three knights; and out of the barge they went and the lady with them and they saw that the ship was more beautiful than any they had ever seen afore. So when they came near they found letters written on it which said a strange thing:—

THOU MAN THAT SHALT ENTER INTO THIS SHIP BEWARE THAT THOU BE IN STEADFAST BELIEF ELSE WILL DANGER BEFALL THEE.

Then said the gentlewoman, "Sir Percivale, wit ye well, I am your sister, and

daughter to King Pellinore and therefore ye are the man in the world that I most love and if ye be not of perfect faith, enter not into the Ship lest ye perish."

Now when Percivale understood this was his sister, he was filled with joy and he said to her, "Fair Sister, I shall enter in without fear and if I be an untrue knight there shall I perish."

Sir Galahad Beholds the Sangreal Uncovered

XXVI

HOW THE THREE KNIGHTS ENTERED ANOTHER SHIP AND OF THE WONDERS THEREIN

THEREWITH Sir Galahad entered into the Ship and then next the gentlewoman and then Sir Bors and Sir Percivale. Then when they were all in, they found it so fair and rich that they marvelled; and in the middle of the Ship was a fair bed and Galahad went and found there a crown of gold. And he saw that on the bed was a sword rich and fair and it was drawn out of the sheath half a foot and more.

Strangely fashioned it was, with pommel of stone that had all manner of colors in it, and was covered with the scales of a serpent and a fish. Then as the knights marvelled together, Sir Percivale's sister spoke and said to them: "There is no hand that handleth this sword shall ever be weary or hurt; and he that handleth it shall have much will in him, and he shall think only on that he beholdeth before him. And as for this sword, there shall never man begrip it now but one, and he shall surpass all others."

"In the name of God," said Percivale, "I shall essay to handle it." So he set his hand thereto but failed.

Then Galahad beheld the sword and saw letters like blood that said:

LET NONE ESSAY TO DRAW ME OUT OF MY SHEATH SAVE HE BE HARDIER THAN ANY OTHER; AND WHO DRAWETH ME, WIT YE WELL THAT HE SHALL SOON FAIL OR BE WOUNDED TO THE

DEATH IF THIS SWORD BE NOT FOR HIM.

"By my faith," said Sir Galahad, "I would draw this sword out of the sheath, but the offending is so great that I shall not set my hand thereto."

"Now, Sir," said the gentlewoman, "wit ye well, that the drawing of this sword is warned to all men save only you, and some that essayed to draw it have been wounded to the death, as I shall now tell you."

"It befell that once this Ship arrived in the realm of Logris where was deadly war between King Labor and King Hurlame, a Saracen. Now when King Hurlame saw the Ship he fled to it, and when he found the sword he drew it and went and smote King Labor, and therewith great desolation fell on the land. But when King Hurlame returned to the Ship to find the scabbard, therewith as he placed the sword therein, he fell down dead on his bed."

Then the knights beheld the scabbard and it seemed to be of a serpent's skin, and

thereon were letters of gold and silver. But the girdle for the scabbard was but poor and not able to sustain so rich a sword. And the letters on the scabbard said:

HE THAT SHALL WIELD ME OUGHT TO BE HARDIER THAN ANY OTHER IF HE WOULD BEAR THIS SWORD AS TRULY AS IT OUGHT TO BE BORNE; AND NO HURT SHALL BEFALL HIM WHO IS GIRT WITH THIS GIRDLE; AND NO ONE SHALL DO AWAY WITH THIS GIRDLE SAVE A MAID WHO IS A KING'S DAUGHTER AND A QUEEN'S, AND SHE MUST BE A MAID ALL THE DAYS OF HER LIFE.

"Sirs," said Percivale, "turn this sword that we may see what is on the other side."

And the sword was red as blood with black letters that said:

HE THAT SHALL PRAISE ME MOST SHALL FIND ME TO BLAME AT A GREAT NEED.

"Now it befell," said Percivale's sister, "that Nacien the Hermit, the good man you have heard of afore that lived in the time of Joseph of Arimathea, found this Ship once and dwelt in it eight days. Then there came a great giant to slay him and Nacien ran to the sword and when he saw how rich it was he praised it, but when he took it out it brake in his hands. So when he had read the letters on the sword Nacien said: 'The thing I praised so have I now cause to blame.' So he left the pieces on the bed and went to fight the giant and killed him.

"Anon he entered the Ship again and the wind arose and drove him through the sea, till by adventure he came to another ship where was King Mordrains. And when each saw the other, they made great joy and related their adventures and Nacien told how the sword had failed him at his need. Then when Mordrains saw the sword, he desired to mend it, so he took the pieces and set them together and

soldered them as fair as they were afore. Therewith he put the sword in the sheath and laid it down on the bed.

"Then heard they a voice that said; 'Nacien, go thou out of this Ship awhile and enter into the other, but beware, for if thou be unworthy, harm shall befall thee.'

"So they went into the other Ship and as Nacien went over the side, he fell on the sword and was smitten and therewith the voice spoke again and said: 'Take thou that, for the drawing of the sword thou wert never worthy to handle, and for this thou wert wounded.'

"Sirs," said Percivale's sister, "thus did King Hurlame meet his death and thus was Nacien wounded, for the sword was not for them. And now shall you hear how this marvellous Ship was made."

XXVII

HOW KING SOLOMON'S WIFE DEVISED THE WONDER SHIP

"It befell that when Solomon was King, there came to him a vision, and a voice spoke telling him that one of his lineage should achieve great deeds, but he should not be born for many years. King Solomon was wise and he knew all the virtues of the stones and trees and the course of the stars and divers things, so he marvelled and studied how he could make some great gift for this one who was to surpass all

others of his line. Now when his wife perceived how he studied, she asked him the cause and the King told her of his vision.

"'Well,' said she, 'I would let make a Ship the most durable that men may find.'

"So King Solomon sent for all the carpenters of the land and his wife devised the Ship and when they had finished it the lady said, 'Sir, syne this man who is to come shall surpass all others, go ye into the Temple where is the sword of King David your father, the which is the most marvellous that ever man bore. Therefore take it, and take off the pommel and make ye a new pommel of precious stones subtily wrought with letters; and after that make a hilt so marvellous that men will wonder, and after that a sheath. And when ye have made all this, I shall fashion a girdle for the sword as shall please me.'

"All this King Solomon did and when the Ship was ready in the sea, the lady let make a bed that was rich and beautiful, and the sword she placed on the bed and

covered it with silk. But the girdle of the sword was of hemp and when King Solomon saw this he was angry.

"'Sir,' said the lady, 'wit ye well, that I have nothing worthy enough to sustain so fair a sword, but it has been told me in a vision that there shall come a maid that shall make for this sword the girdle that is worthy enough for it. And all this shall be achieved; but the time I know not.'

"Then she let make a covering for the Ship, of silk that should endure in any weather. Then would she devise spindles for the Ship. So came she to the garden and to the tree that it was said Eve brought with her from the Garden of Eden. And the branch that she brought she planted in the earth and anon the branch grew so, that within a little while it was a great tree and as white as any snow. But after the birth of Cain part of the tree turned as green as any grass. Then it befell that under this tree Cain killed Abel and therewith the tree

came to be in part red. So the tree endured through the years and was very fair to behold. Now Solomon's wife ordered that a branch be cut from the part of the tree that was white, and a branch from that which was green, and also a branch from that part which was red, and of these three branches she let make three spindles for the Ship and when they were ready they were fastened into the Ship."

"So when the King saw all this he said: 'Ye have done marvellously to devise a Ship of such wonder, but who shall say how its adventure shall be achieved?'

"'Ye shall have tidings,' said the lady, 'sooner than ye ween.'

"So it befell on a night as King Solomon lay before the Ship he thought there came from heaven a great company of angels and they alit on the Ship and took water that was brought by one of the angels in a vessel of silver and let it fall on the Ship. And after this the angel came to the sword and drew letters on it and on the scabbard.

Then went the angel to the Ship's side and wrote there letters that said:

THOU MAN THAT SHALT ENTER HERE, BEWARE THAT THOU BE FULL OF FAITH, ERE THOU ENTER IN.

"When King Solomon espied these letters, he marvelled and he durst not enter the Ship. Anon the Ship was driven out to sea, and it went so fast that he soon lost sight of it. Then a voice spoke and said, 'Solomon, one of thy lineage shall rest in this bed.'

"So, Sirs," said Percivale's sister, "by marvellous adventure hath the Ship endured these many years and now are all these sayings to be fulfilled."

Anon the three knights looked upon the three spindles and found them of the three colors, and they marvelled greatly that such wonders had been accomplished and that many more would be fulfilled in the Ship.

XXVIII

HOW PERCIVALE'S SISTER GAVE SIR GALAHAD THE GOLDEN GIRDLE

For a long time the three knights beheld the marvels of the bed and the spindles, then Sir Percivale lifted up the covering of the bed and saw there a rich purse and therein was a letter that told how the Ship was devised. "Now," said Sir Galahad, "where shall we find the maiden that shall make a new girdle for the sword?"

"Fair Sir," said Percivale's sister, "dismay you not for I have made a girdle for this sword such as it needeth." Therewith

she opened the golden casket she had brought and took out a girdle that was seemly wrought with golden threads, and upon these were set full precious stones and a rich buckle of gold.

"Sirs," said she, "here is the girdle that ought to be set about this sword. And wit you well, the greatest part of this girdle was made of my hair, for when I wist that this adventure was ordained for me, I clipped my hair and made this girdle in the name of God." Then went Percivale's sister and set the girdle on the sword.

"Damosel," said Percivale, "we are greatly beholden to you for the fair adventures ye have lead us to, now tell us we pray you the name of this sword."

"Truly," said she, "the name of this sword is THE SWORD OF THE STRANGE GIRDLES."

At this Percivale and Bors said to Galahad, "We pray you gird now this marvellous sword." "Well," said Galahad, "I will essay." So he placed his hand to

the sword and drew it from the scabbard. Therewith Percivale's sister knelt before him and girt him with the golden girdle and she said: "Now care I not if I die, for I hold me one of the most blessed maidens of the world that this girdle I have made is worn by the Best Knight of the World."

"Damosel," said Sir Galahad to her, "ye have done so much for me that I shall be your knight all the days of my life."

Now when Galahad was girt with the sword all went out of the Wonder Ship into the other and the wind drove them out to sea at a great pace. Anon on the morrow they came to a Castle called Carteloise that was in the marches of Scotland, and when they had passed the port Percivale's sister said to them: "Sirs, here are men that if they wist ye were of King Arthur's Court would assail you."

"Damosel," said Sir Galahad, "He that hath cared for us shall now deliver us."

XXIX

HOW THE THREE KNIGHTS CAME TO A CASTLE AND HOW SIR GALAHAD DELIVERED ONE THEREIN

As the four left the ship, there came a squire to them and asked who they were and the knights said they were of King Arthur's Court.

"Is that truth?" said he, "Now by my head, that is ill for you." And he turned again and went unto the Castle.

Within a while they heard a horn blow and a gentlewoman came to them and

asked them whence they were and they told her.

"Fair lords," said she, "for God's love turn again for you may ride unto your death."

"Nay," said they, "we will not turn again, for He in whose service we be entered shall deliver us."

As they stood talking, there came out knights well armed and bade them yield them or else die.

"That yielding," said the three knights, "shall not be save by force, and this shall go hard with you."

At this the other knights let their horses run, and therewith Percivale smote the foremost to the earth and took his horse and mounted thereupon; likewise did Galahad. Also Bors served another so. And they were well pleased, for the three knights had left their horses in another country. So when they were horsed then began they to set upon the others; and they of the Castle fled unto a strong fortress and then

into the Castle and the three knights followed them. There they alit on foot and slew their adversaries and then went into the Hall of the Castle. But when they beheld the great number of people they had slain, they thought they had done great wrong.

"Certes," said Sir Bors, "I ween they have done so much wickedness they should suffer."

Then came there out of a chamber, a good man in religious clothing; and when he saw them which lay dead in the Hall he was all abashed. And Galahad took off his helmet and kneeled down for his blessing and so did his fellows.

"Sir," said Sir Galahad, "have no dread of us, for we be of King Arthur's Court."

Then asked the good man how these knights were slain so suddenly and the three told him.

"Truly," said the good man, "an you live as long as the world might endure, you might not have done so great a deed as this."

"Sir," said Galahad, "I repent me much, if they were good knights."

"Nay, repent ye not," said he, "for they were not good and I shall tell you of them.

"Here lives Earl Hernox, and he had three sons that were wicked in all their ways, and they had a sister who was as fair a gentlewoman as ever lived and she desired ever to turn them from their ways. So for this cause, one day they slew her and took their father and put him in prison after they had wounded him nigh unto death. But a cousin of his rescued him. Then they did great untruth; they slew all men of religion and beat down chapels that service might not be said. And such shame had never man as I had with the three brethren. But the Earl bade me suffer all this, for he said they should not long endure, for three servants of God should destroy them. And now is it brought to an end as he said."

When the three knights had heard this

they asked the good man to bring them to Earl Hernox and they carried him out of prison and placed him in the middle of the Hall. And the Earl knew Sir Galahad though he had never seen him afore.

And he began to weep right softly and said: "Long have I abiden thy coming which God revealed to me. Now for God's love, hold me in thine arms that my soul may depart out of my body in so good a man's arms as thine."

"Gladly," said Galahad.

Then the Earl spoke again and all heard his words:

"Galahad, well hast thou avenged me on God's enemies; now go thou to the Wounded King as soon as thou mayest, for he shall receive health by thee, and he hath abiden thee long."

Therewith as the Earl spoke, his soul departed from the body and Galahad made him to be buried richly.

Right so departed the three knights and Percivale's sister with them, and they rode forth from the Castle to take what adventure might befall them.

XXX

OF THE CASTLE OF THE STRANGE CUSTOM

THEN came they to a Castle and would have passed by, but there came out a knight all armed after them and said: "Sirs, hark what I shall say to you; is this gentlewoman that you lead a maid?"

"Sir," said Percivale's sister, "a maid am I."

Then the knight took her horse by the bridle and said: "By the Holy Cross ye shall not escape me afore ye have yielded the custom of this Castle."

"Let her go," said Sir Percivale, "ye be not wise to hold her, for a maid in what place she goeth is free."

In the meanwhile there came out twelve armed knights from the Castle, and with them came a gentlewoman that held a dish of silver, and she said: "This maid must yield us the custom of this Castle, for every maid that passeth hereby shall give this dish full of blood from her right arm."

"Blame have ye," said Galahad, "that brought up such customs, and so God me save I ensure you that this gentlewoman shall not so do, while that I live."

"So God me help," said Percivale, "I had liefer be slain."

"And I also," said Sir Bors.

"By my troth," said the knights, "then shall you die, for you may not endure against us though you were the best knights of the world." Then they let them run each to other, and the three fellows beat the twelve knights and then set their hands to their swords and slew them down.

Then there came out of the Castle a three score of knights, armed and the three fellows said to them: "Fair Sirs, have mercy on yourselves and have not ado with us."

"Nay, fair lords," said the knights of the Castle, "we counsel you to withdraw you, for you be the best knights of the world; and therefore do no more for you have done enough. We will let you go with this harm, but we must needs have the custom."

"Certes," said Galahad, "for naught speak you."

"Well," said they, "will you die?"

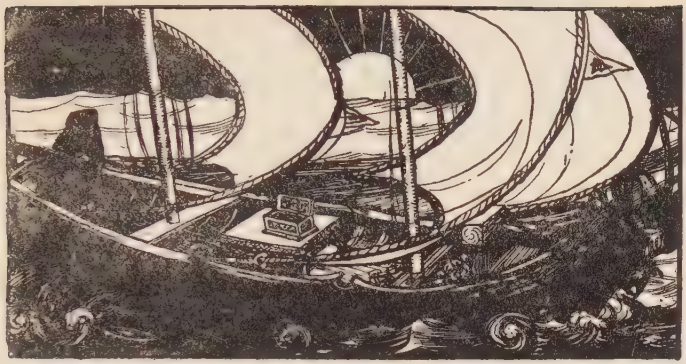
"We be not yet come thereto," said Sir Galahad.

Then began they to fight together and Sir Galahad drew his sword of the Strange Girdles and smote on the right hand and on the left, and slew whatever was near him and did such marvels that there was none that saw him but deemed he was no earthly man. And his two fellows helped him passing well and so they fought till it was night. Then came out one who said to the

three fellows: "If you will come in to-night and take such harbor as is in the Castle, you shall be right welcome and we shall ensure you by the faith of our bodies and as we be true knights, to leave you in such estate to-morrow as we find you. And as soon as you know the custom of the Castle, we dare say you will accord."

"Then for God's love," said Percivale's sister, "go thither and spare not for me."

"Go we," said Galahad. Right so they entered into the Castle and when they were alit, all therein made great joy of them.



XXXI

OF THE DEATH OF PERCIVALE'S SISTER

So within a while the knights asked the custom of the Castle and wherefore it was.

"There is in this Castle," said the others, "a gentlewoman, and we are hers and this Castle is hers and many another. And it befell many years ago that there came upon her a malady and so she lay a great while and could have no remedy. Then came an old man that said if she might be anointed with a dish full of the blood of a maid who

was a king's daughter, that should be her health. And for this was the custom of the Castle ordained, that every maid that passed by should give her blood for the gentlewoman, so at last she might be healed."

"Now, fair Knights," said Percivale's sister, "I see well that this gentlewoman hath need of me."

"Damosel," said Galahad, "if ye do this for her, ye may die."

"Truly," said she, "an I die for to heal her I shall get me great worship, and better is one harm than so much wrong. And therefore there shall be no more battle, but to-morrow I shall yield the custom of this Castle."

Then was there great joy; for else had there been mortal war upon the morn. So would Percivale's sister fulfil the custom of the Castle whether the three knights would or no.

That night were they eased with the best and on the morn when they had heard

service, Percivale's sister bade them bring forth the sick lady.

So she came and she said unto them: "Who shall let me have what I desire?"

Therewith Percivale's sister came forth and laid her arm in the dish and they took her blood. Then she lifted up her hand and blessed the lady and said: "Madam, I am come to death for to make ye whole, so for God's love, pray for me." With that she fell in a swoon. Then Galahad, Bors, and Percivale came up to her and lifted her, and she said when she was awaked: "Fair Brother Percivale, I die for the healing of this lady and I require that ye bury me not in this country, but as soon as I am dead, put me in a boat ye will find at the next haven and let me go as adventure will lead me. And soon you three shall come to the city of Sarras, there to achieve the Sangreal; and there you shall find me under a tower, arrived. And there bury me in the Spiritual Place. And I say this much, there shall Galahad be buried and ye also in the same place."

Then Percivale understood these words and granted her request weeping. Anon she said: "Fair fellows, to-morrow at the hour of prime, you three shall depart each from other, till adventure bring you to the Maimed King." Then Percivale's sister asked for their prayers and soon her soul departed from her body.

And it befell that the lady of the Castle was healed that same day.

Then Percivale made a letter of it all to tell how his sister had helped the lady and how she had brought them to many strange adventures; and he put this in her right hand. So they brought her to the haven and found where waited the ship, and they laid her therein and covered her with black silk. And the wind arose and drove the ship from the land and they beheld it till it was out of their sight.

When they were returned to the Castle suddenly there fell a great tempest and the Castle was driven in, but the knights took shelter in a chapel nearby. So as they

waited there came by a knight armed that was wounded and he cried: "Succor me for I am in peril." Straightway there came after him another knight and a dwarf which cried out to him: "Stand, for ye may not escape." At this the wounded knight held up his hands and prayed God that he might not die in this way.

"Truly," said Galahad, "I shall succor him for the sake of Him he calleth upon."

"Sir," said Bors, "grant that I may do this." So Galahad consented and Sir Bors took his horse and commended himself to God and rode after to rescue the wounded knight.

All the night Galahad and Percivale remained in the chapel and made their prayers for Sir Bors that he might achieve the adventure. Then on the morrow they rode forth and found the Castle all fallen in. Also they espied how everywhere were the tombs of ladies that had died to save the gentlewoman and all in the Castle seemed to have perished.

"Wherefore was this vengeance?" said Galahad. "My heart is heavy with sorrow that ever we consented to the giving of the gentle life of thy sister, for now I think that this was an evil custom that we should not have followed."

When the two knights had ridden a while, Sir Percivale said unto Sir Galahad, "Now must we depart the one from the other and let us pray that we may meet in short time." Then they took off their helms and kissed each other and wept at the departing and so rode each upon his way.

XXXII

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT MET WITH HIS SON GALAHAD

Now the story turneth to Sir Launcelot and telleth how a vision came unto him while he was asleep; and a voice said: "Launcelot, rise up and take thine armor, and enter into the first ship that thou shalt find."

And when Launcelot heard these words, he started up and took his arms and made him ready. And so by adventure he came by a strand and there found a ship that was without sail or oar. And as soon as he was

within the ship, there he felt the most sweet joy that ever he felt, and he was filled with all sweet thoughts.

And he said: "Fair Father, I wot not in what joy I am, for this joy passeth all earthly joy that ever I was in."

So in this joy he laid him down on the ship's board and slept till day.

Therewith when he awoke he found a fair bed and lying therein a fair gentlewoman dead; the which was Percivale's sister. And as Launcelot saw her he espied in her right hand a letter the which told him of her adventures and of what lineage she was come. So with this gentlewoman Sir Launcelot was a month and more.

If ye would ask how he lived: by Him that fed the people of Israel the manna in the desert, was he fed. For every day when he made his prayers he was sustained by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

So on a night, he went to rest him on the water side for he was somewhat weary of

the ship. Right so he heard a horse come and looked to see who might be riding on him. And as the rider came nigh he seemed a knight. So he let him pass and the knight rode to where the ship was and there he alit and took the saddle and bridle and put the horse from him and went toward the ship. Then Launcelot said to him: "Ye be welcome."

And the knight answered and saluted him and said: "What is your name, for much my heart giveth unto you?"

"Truly," said he, "my name is Launcelot du Lake."

"Sir," said the knight, "then be ye welcome for ye are my father."

"Ah," said Launcelot, "ye are Galahad then."

"Yea, forsooth," said the knight. Right so he kneeled down and asked his father's blessing, and Launcelot took off his helm and kissed him.

There is no tongue can tell the joy either made of other; and many a friendly word

they spoke, as kin would. And each told the other of the marvels and adventures that had befallen them in many journeys since they had departed from the Court.

Anon as Sir Galahad saw the gentlewoman dead in the bed, he knew her well enough; and told great worship of her, that she was the best maid living, and that it was great pity she had died. And when Sir Launcelot heard how the marvellous sword was gotten and who made it and all the marvels, then he prayed Galahad his son, that he would show him the sword; and so he did. Anon he kissed the pommel and the hilt and scabbard.

"Truly," said Launcelot, "never knew I of such high adventure done, or of so marvellous and strange."

So dwelt Launcelot and Galahad within that ship for half a year, and served God daily and nightly with all their power. And often they arrived in isles far from folk where repaired none but wild beasts;

and there they found many strange adventures and perilous, but it would be too long to tell all those adventures that befell them.

XXXIII

HOW SIR GALAHAD LEFT HIS FATHER AND HOW SIR LAUNCELOT RETURNED TO CAMELOT

After Easter at the new time when the birds sing their sweet and varied songs it befell that the ship came to land and Galahad and Launcelot saw how at the edge of the forest there stood waiting a knight all armed in white, richly horsed, that led by his right hand a white horse. And so he came to the ship and saluted the two knights and said: "Sir Galahad, thou hast been long enough with thy father; come

now out of the ship and start upon this horse and go where adventure shall lead thee in the quest of the Sangreal."

Then Galahad went to his father and kissed him sweetly and said: "Fair, sweet father, I wot not when I shall see you again in this world."

"I pray you," said Launcelot, "ask of the high Father that He hold me in His service."

Then they heard a voice that said: "The one shall never see the other afore they meet above."

"Now, son Galahad," said Launcelot, "since we shall depart and never see each other more, I pray to the high Father to guard you."

"Sir," said Galahad, "no prayer availeth so much as yours." Then Sir Galahad entered into the forest.

Right so the wind arose and drove Launcelot's ship out to sea; and there he journeyed more than a month, wherein he slept but little and prayed God

that he might see some tidings of the Sangreal.

So it befell on a night, at midnight, he arrived afore a Castle that was rich and fair and there was a postern opened before the sea; and the moon shone clear. Anon Sir Launcelot heard a voice that said: "Launcelot, go out of this ship and enter the Castle where thou shalt see a great part of thy desire."

So Launcelot entered the Castle and there remained many days; and there saw he a vision of the Sangreal he had long desired to see, for he had come to the Castle of Carbonek, and King Pelles was passing glad to have the knight with him. Therewith he told him tidings of how his fair daughter Elaine was dead and right sorrowful was Sir Launcelot.

So then he rode away from the Castle and passed through the realm of Logris and many other realms. So came he to an Abbey in the country of Gore and they made him great cheer, and he dwelled there for

the night and on the morn he heard service. And he saw before the altar a rich tomb the which was newly made; and also he saw letters of gold written on it that said:

HERE LIETH KING BAGDEMAGUS OF GORE, WHICH KING ARTHUR'S NEPHEW SIR GAWAIN SLEW.

Then was Launcelot filled with sorrow for he loved King Bagdemagus much, and had he met his death by any other save Gawain, him would he not have spared.

"Ah," said he, "this is a great hurt unto King Arthur and a loss unto his Court."

So then Sir Launcelot departed and came to the White Abbey where Galahad achieved the adventure of the tomb and won the white shield with the red cross; and on the morn he turned unto Camelot where he found King Arthur and the Queen. But many of the knights of the Round Table he found had been slain, more than half; and he found there were come home again, Sir Gawain, Sir Ector, Sir Lionel, and many others.

And all the Court was passing glad of Sir Launcelot, and the King asked him tidings of his son Galahad. Then Launcelot told the King of the adventures that had befallen him since he had departed. And also he told him of the marvellous adventures of Galahad, Percivale, and Bors which he knew by the letter of the dead damosel and as the knights had told him.

"Now God would," said the King, "that they were all three here."

"That shall never be," said Launcelot, "for two of them shall ye never see, but one of them shall come again."

XXXIV

HOW SIR GALAHAD DELIVERED KING MORDRAINS AND MOYS

Now Sir Galahad rode many journeys until at last he came to the Abbey where King Mordrains was; and when he heard of the King he thought he would abide to see him. So upon the morn, when he had heard service, he came unto King Mordrains; and anon the King that had lain blind so long a time, saw him and he said: "Galahad, true servant of God, whose coming I have abiden so long, now embrace me and let me rest in thine arms for thou art a pure

knight above all knights; thou art white as the flower of the lily; and thou art like the rose which is the flower of all good virtues and the color of fire; and the fire of the Holy Spirit is so in thee, that my flesh which was old is become young again."

When Sir Galahad heard his words, then he embraced him. Then said the King: "Fair Father, now I have my will. Now I require Thee that Thou come and save me." And anon God heard his prayer; therewith his soul departed from the body. Right so Galahad put him in the earth as a King ought to be buried. And Sir Galahad departed and came into a perilous forest where he found a well that boiled with great waves. But as soon as he set his hand thereto it ceased from boiling, so that it burnt no more and the heat departed; for no evil might endure his touch. And this was taken in the country for a miracle; and ever afterward this place was called, "Galahad's Well."

Then it befell that by adventure Sir

Galahad came into the country of Gore and into the Abbey where Sir Launcelot had been; and there he found the tomb of King Bagdemagus.

Then the monks led Galahad into a croft under the minster and there he saw a tomb which burnt full marvellously. Then asked he the monks what it was.

"Sir," said they, "a marvellous adventure is this, that may not be brought unto end but by him that passeth in bounty and knighthood all the knights of the Round Table."

"I would," said Galahad, "that ye would lead me thereto."

"Gladly," said they.

And so they led him unto a cave and he went down upon the steps and came nigh the tomb. Right so the flaming failed and the fire stanched, the which many a day had been so great.

Then spake a voice that said: "Much art thou beholden to thank God who hath given thee this good hour, that thou mayest

draw out earthly souls from pain and put them into the joys of Paradise. I am Moys of your kindred, who hath dwelled in this heat more than four hundred winters, to be purged of the sin I did against Joseph of Arimathea."

Therewith as he spoke, the soul of Moys departed and Galahad took the body in his arms and bare it into the minster.

That night Galahad lay in the Abbey and the next morn he gave Moys service, and put him in the earth before the high altar.

XXXV

HOW PERCIVALE AND BORS MET WITH SIR GALAHAD AND HOW THEY CAME TO THE CASTLE OF CARBONEK

THEN departed Sir Galahad from the Abbey, and so he rode for five days; and ever followed Sir Percivale those five days asking where he had been. So on a day it befell that they met in a great forest and as they came out from it, they met with Sir Bors. Right glad were the three knights to be together again, and each told the other of his adventures.

And Sir Bors said to them: "It is more than a year and a half that I have been in the wild forests and mountains and not where men dwelled; but God was ever my comfort."

Then rode the three knights a great while till they came to the Castle of Carbonek. And when they were entered into that Castle, King Pelles knew them and there was great joy for he wist well that they had been faithful in the quest of the Sangreal.

Then Eliazar, King Pelles' son, brought afore them the broken sword of Joseph of Arimathea and bade Sir Bors set his hand thereto that he might solder it whole again. But this he might not achieve so Eliazar took the sword to Galahad and said: "Take it now, for if the mending is to be achieved ye must do it."

Therewith Sir Galahad took the pieces of the sword and set them together; and then they seemed as if they had never been broken and the sword appeared strong and new.

Now when King Pelles espied that this adventure was achieved, then he gave the sword to Sir Bors for he deemed him a passing good knight and a worthy man.

Then there came a voice that spoke among them and said: "They that ought not to sit at the Lord's Table, arise; for now shall true knights be fed."

So all went thence, all save King Pelles and his son, the which were holy men, and a maid that was King Pelles' niece; and the three knights were there, but no more.

Anon they saw knights all armed come in at the Hall door, and they took off their helms and their armour and said unto Galahad: "Sir, we have desired much to be with you at this Table, where we shall be blessed with holy things."

"Ye be welcome, Sirs," said Galahad, "but whence come ye?" And three of them said they were of Gaul and the other three said they were of Ireland and the other three said they were of Denmark.

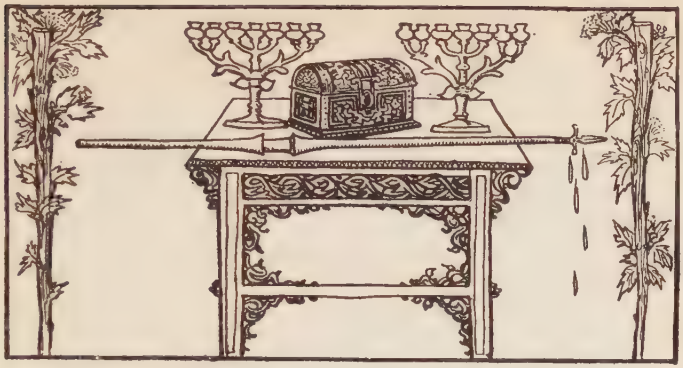
So as they waited there appeared a bed

made of a tree the which four gentlewomen brought; and in the bed lay an old man sick, and a crown of gold was on his head. And there in the middle of the Hall they set him down and went their way.

Then the old man lifted up his head and said: "Galahad, good knight, be ye welcome, for much have I desired your coming; and in much anguish have I long been; but now I trust to God the time is come that my pain shall be allayed, and that I shall pass out of this world as it was promised me long ago."

So when he had spoken, they heard another voice that said: "There be two among you, that are not in the quest of the Sangreal, therefore must they depart."

So King Pelles and his son departed from the Hall.



XXXVI

OF THE MARVELLOUS VISION THAT CAME TO THE THREE KNIGHTS AND HOW SIR GALAHAD HEALED THE WOUNDED KING

THEREWITH there came a good man clothed in the vestments of a Bishop, and four angels seemed to come from heaven and they bare him in a chair and set him down afore the Table of Silver whereupon the Sangreal was. And it seemed that he had letters written in the middle of his forehead which said:

SEE YOU HERE JOSEPH, THE

SAME WHICH GOD SUCCORED IN THE CITY OF SARRAS, IN THE SPIRITUAL PLACE.

Then the knights marvelled, for Joseph had been dead more than four hundred years.

Then this good man said, "O knights, marvel not that once I was an earthly man."

With that they heard the door open and angels came in and two bare candles of wax and the third a covering and the fourth a Spear which bled marvellously, and three drops fell within a box which the good man held in his hand. And the angels set the candles upon the table and the covering upon the Holy Vessel, and the Spear upon the box. Then the good man rose and took the Holy Vessel and held it high, and through the covering a light, bright as any fire, shone.

Then Joseph went to Galahad and kissed him, and bade him go and kiss his fellows; and so he did.

"Now true servants," said Joseph, "ye

shall be fed at this table with such food as never knights tasted." And when he said this he vanished away. So the three knights waited at the table in great dread and made their prayers. Then looked they and seemed to see the very person of Jesus with the Holy Vessel in his hands, and he said to them, "My knights and my servants, and my true children which are come into spiritual life, I will no longer hide me from you, but you shall see now a part of my hidden things and receive what you have so much desired."

Then he came to Galahad and gave him from the Holy Vessel and that knight received with joy; and after him so received his fellows and they found it marvellously sweet.

Then he who bore the Vessel said to Galahad, "Son, wottest thou what I hold betwixt my hands? This is the holy dish wherein I took of the Lamb on Sher Thursday. And now hast thou seen what thou hast most desired to see; but yet hast thou not

seen it so openly as thou shalt see it in the City of Sarras, in the Spiritual Place. Therefore it shall depart from the realm of Logris and it shall nevermore be seen here. And wottest thou wherefore? For reason that it hath not been served and worshipped here; therefore shall I take away this honor. So on the morn, go ye three unto the sea where ye shall find your ship ready; and with thee take the Sword of the Strange Girdles, and none shall go with thee save Sir Percivale and Sir Bors. Also I will that thou take of the blood from the Spear for to anoint the Maimed King, so he shall have his health." Then he who spoke gave them his blessing and vanished away.

Anon went Sir Galahad to the Spear which lay upon the Table and touched it, and went to the Maimed King and so annointed his legs with the blood. Therewith the King started upon his feet out of his bed, and so he thanked God for his healing. Anon he went to an Abbey and lived there ever after a holy man.

That same night as Sir Galahad and his two fellows rested in the Castle, a voice spake and said, "Sons, go ye hence now as I bade you."

And Galahad said, "We thank Thee, Lord, that Thou hast vouchsafed to call us to Thy service. Now will we prove that we are Thy true servants."

So the three fellows made haste to depart, and Sir Galahad prayed those knights of Gaul if they should arrive in King Arthur's Court, to salute for him his father Sir Launcelot and all the knights of the Round Table. Therewith departed Galahad and Percivale and Bors from the Castle of Carbonek.

XXXVII

HOW THE THREE KNIGHTS CAME UNTO THE CITY OF SARRAS AND HOW SIR GALAHAD WAS MADE KING OF SARRAS

RIGHT so Galahad, Percivale, and Bors rode three days until they came to the sea and found the marvellous Ship. Anon when they had entered, they found in the middle of the Ship the Table of Silver that had been in the Castle of Carbonek; and there on the Table was the Holy Vessel, covered with white samite, and beside it was

the Spear. Then were the three knights passing glad to have these holy things with them and they entered the Ship with great reverence. Now Sir Galahad was in prayer a long time and he asked of God to grant him to go out of the world when he should desire. Therewith as he prayed came a voice that said, "Galahad, thou shalt have thy desire; and when thou askest the death of thy body, thou shalt have it; then shalt thou find the life of thy soul."

Now when Sir Percivale heard this he asked of Sir Galahad for the fellowship that was between them to tell him wherefore he had such desire.

"Sir," said Galahad, "that I shall tell you. The other day when we saw a part of the adventure of the Sangreal I was in such joy of heart as never an earthly man was in afore. So would I depart from this life that I may ever be near these high things."

Anon at nightfall Sir Galahad rested him in that bed wherein no one yet had lain,

and the Ship made way swiftly through the water. So when they had slept a great while, they awaked and looked afore them and saw the City of Sarras. Then when they were landed they saw another barge, and Percivale's sister lay therein.

"Truly," said Sir Percivale, "God hath brought my sister to keep covenant with us."

Then took they out of the Ship the Table of Silver and carried it to the City. So as they came to the gate they saw there an old man that was a cripple and Sir Galahad called him and bade him help them bear the Table.

"Sir," said the old man, "since these ten years I might not walk but on crutches."

"Have no fear," said Sir Galahad, "but arise now and help us." Therewith the cripple essayed and found himself as whole as ever, and he came to the Table and bare it with the knights.

Straightway it was noised about the city that a cripple had been made whole by a

strange knight and how he and his two fellows bore with them a strange table.

Meanwhile there came to the three knights, good men clothed all in white that welcomed them, and they kissed the shield that was on Sir Galahad. These men were of the lineage of those that Joseph had left in Sarras and they knew well the story of the shield; and these worshipped daily in the Spiritual Place and followed the teachings of Joseph.

Then all went to the sea and so brought to the Spiritual Place Sir Percivale's sister, and there buried her as richly as a king's daughter ought to be buried.

Now the King of Sarras that was named Estorause had tried to do away with the good customs of these men, and he was afeared when he heard of these knights, so he bade them come before him and asked them whence they were and what thing it was they carried with them upon the Table of Silver. And when they told him of the Sangreal and how they had been bidden of

God to bring it to the City of Sarras the King took them and put them in a deep hole in the prison. But as they lay there, they were comforted and sustained by the Holy Vessel.

Then it befell that King Estorause was sick and he felt that he should die, so he sent for the three knights and when they were come before him he asked their mercy. And the three knights forgave him and anon the King died. So as the people were in counsel, there came a voice that bade them choose the youngest of the three knights to be their King. And by the assent of all the city Sir Galahad was made King and the people were passing glad.

Then King Galahad brought the Table of Silver to the Spiritual Place and made of it an altar. And so he made a chest of gold with precious stones to hold the Holy Vessel; and after this a screen made he to go before the altar, that resembled a

golden tree, and precious stones he placed upon it.

Every day early in the morn, the three fellows came to the Spiritual Place and made their prayers before this altar.

XXXVIII

HOW SIR GALAHAD BEHELD THE SANGREAL UNCOVERED

Now when Sir Galahad had borne the crown of gold a year and a day, he arose up on that day with his two fellows and came to the Spiritual Place to make his prayers. And when they entered the chapel, they saw before the altar, a man in the likeness of a Bishop kneeling there and about him was a great company of angels. And then he arose and began the service. Anon he called Galahad to him and said: "Come

forth, true servant of God, and thou shalt see what thou hast much desired to see." And as Galahad went forward he held high the Holy Vessel uncovered. At this Galahad began to tremble greatly for he began to behold spiritual things. But what he saw no earthly tongue may relate.

Then Galahad held up his hands toward heaven and said: "Lord, I thank thee, for now I see what hath been my desire so long to see. Now, blessed Lord, I would no longer live if it might please thee." Therewith the good man took the Vessel and proffered it to Sir Galahad and he received it gladly and meekly.

"Now, wottest thou who I am?" the good man said.

"Nay, fair Sir," said Galahad.

Then said the good man: "I am Joseph of Arimathea, whom God hath sent to bear thee fellowship; and wottest thou wherefore He hath sent me more than any other? For that thou resemblest me in two things: in that thou hast seen the marvels of the

Sangreal and in that thou hast been a pure knight, passing in goodness all others."

So when the good man had said these words he disappeared.

Then Sir Galahad arose and went to Percivale and kissed him and commended him to God. Likewise did he unto Sir Bors and said: "Fair Sir, salute for me my father Sir Launcelot, and bid him remember how unstable is this world." Then Sir Galahad kneeled down afore the Silver Table and made his prayers. Therewith as he knelt, his soul departed to God and a great multitude of angels bare his soul to heaven. And his two fellows beheld them.

Also, they saw come down from heaven a hand, and then it came right to the Holy Vessel and took it and the Spear and so bare them up to heaven. Since then was there never man so hardy as to say that he hath seen the Sangreal.

XXXIX

OF THE SORROW THAT PERCIVALE AND BORS MADE WHEN SIR GALAHAD WAS DEAD. OF THE DEATH OF SIR PERCIVALE AND OF HOW SIR BORS RETURNED TO CAMELOT

When Sir Percivale and Sir Bors saw that Galahad was dead, they made as much sorrow as ever did two men, and all the people in the city were filled with sorrow. Then was Sir Galahad buried in the Spiritual Place and as soon as this was done,

Sir Percivale yielded him to the order of holy men in Sarras and took on their religious clothing. And Bors was ever with him, but he changed not his clothing for he purposed to go again into the realm of Logris. Thus a year and two months lived Sir Percivale a full holy life, and then passed he out of the world, and Sir Bors buried him beside his sister and Sir Galahad in the Spiritual Place.

So when Bors saw that he was alone in these far countries he departed from Sarras and then by good adventure he came again into the realm of Logris, and he rode fast till he came to Camelot where the King was. There great joy was made of him, for all weened that he had been dead, he had been so long out of the country. Then Sir Bors told of his adventures and of Galahad's and Percivale's, and the King had all these things written down.

Anon Sir Bors said to Sir Launcelot, "Galahad, your own son, bade me salute you, and after you King Arthur and all the

Court; and so did Sir Percivale; and them I buried with my own hands in the City of Sarras. Also your son prayed that ye would remember how unstable is this world, and of the joys ye had when ye were together for more than half a year."

"Well remember I that joy," said Sir Launcelot, "and I trust to God that this prayer of Galahad's will avail me." Then Sir Launcelot took Sir Bors in his arms and said, "Gentle cousin, ye are welcome here again, and all that I may ever do for you and for yours, ye shall find me ready at all times to do. And I promise you faithfully never to fail. So shall we be near each other as long as our lives last, to remember those knights we loved so well."

"Sir," said Sir Bors, "as ye will, so is my desire."

HERE ENDETH THIS STORY OF THE SANGREAL, THE WHICH IS CHRONICLED AS ONE OF THE TRUEST AND

HOLIEST THAT IS IN THE WORLD. AND ALL THEY THAT HEAR IT OUGHT TO UNDERSTAND IT AND TO FORGET ALL THE WRONGS THAT THEY HAVE IN THEIR HEARTS. FOR RIGHT PROFITABLE SHALL IT BE TO THOSE THAT SHALL HEAR IT OF THE HEART.

NOTES

The purpose of this book is to meet the need which exists for a clear narrative of the story of Galahad, which the young child as well as the older reader may enjoy, and the need for a consecutive series of pictures for illustration.

The pictures in the Boston Public Library, the production of *Parsifal* in this country, and the recent discussion as to the disposition of Glastonbury Abbey, have given an impetus to the interest in Arthurian stories and Grail Legends awakened generally by Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. But in retelling the stories so many variations have been given, as by Tennyson and Wagner in their verses and Abbey in his paintings, that there exists a vagueness as to what the original legends really were.

Readers will find a clear and interesting summary of the legends in Mr. Nutt's book on the subject and the old French and English romances from which the Arthurian stories have been derived are to be found in any large library, edited by the special scholars on this subject—Paris, Hucher, Furnivall, et al. The development of the legends may be easily traced in Mr. Nutt's book and the differences noted between the two branches of Grail stories, the one which has for its hero, Perceval ; the other which has for its hero, Galahad.

The older story of Perceval Wagner made generally known in his *Parsifal*, while Tennyson borrowing from the

first English form (Malory's) of the Galahad story made that hero beloved among English readers, although his Galahad is less human, less interesting and not so lovable as the real hero of Mapes and Malory. Mr. Abbey chose to combine the Perceval with the Galahad story in his paintings and the pictures are therefore inadequate as a series for illustration. They are in the nature of a shrine to which the lover of Grail Legends goes from time to time, to be newly inspired by their beauty.

The character of Galahad is an interesting contrast to that of Perceval, and though less human he represents a type as familiar now as that of Perceval. The main theme in the older story is the healing of a Wounded King by a Question which the hero, his heart being full of pity, shall ask. But the hero fails on first seeing the Grail and its mysteries to speak the destined words, and only after years of wandering he returns again, and now made wise through suffering and failure he looks not uncomprehendingly, as before, but with pitiful understanding, and voices the question of his heart.

The main theme in the Galahad story is the quest for the Holy Grail, that is, the effort to see the Grail uncovered, to behold its mysteries; but the supreme vision of the Grail was granted Galahad only, who heals others beside the Keeper. Galahad need ask no question, nor does he depend on human knowledge; he knows no failure and is seemingly possessed of divine intuition.

Each type is consistently developed from the years of its hero's childhood to the final achievement of his mission. The Perceval story is full of beautiful pictures of a happy, human boyhood surrounded with the freedom of Nature and the mother care and love. Galahad's childhood is

surrounded with mystery and pathos; an atmosphere of consecration is about him. He is, I think, the favorite hero with young children, for the Perceval story has problems more suited to the older reader. Both stories will have ardent champions and their comparison is one of the most interesting themes in literature.

NOTES REFERRING TO CERTAIN CHAPTERS OF THE STORY

(*Malory's story is taken from the French of Walter Mapes*)

Prologue.—The word "Grail" or "Greal" is derived perhaps from *graal* which signifies a dish, or possibly from *gradalis*, meaning a collection of sacred writings. Two other meanings have been suggested which do not seem probable; one is that *sangreal* instead of meaning holy greal, signifies *sang réal* or real blood. The other supposes greal to be derived from *agreer*, something agreeable.

In Malory the Grail is called Sangreal or Holy Vessel. The story says that the Holy Vessel was "the dish wherein our Lord ate the Paschal Lamb on Sher-Thursday." The dish was shaped probably like a bowl resting on a low standard, which form may have developed into the goblet shape which became the chief symbol of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and the form by which the Grail is usually represented.

"Avalon" means garden of apples, and although some students believe Avalon to have been a far-away, mystic island since sunk into the seas, the mysterious island of Queen Morgan Le Fay and her

fairies, or the Blessed Isles of Celtic folk lore, Glastonbury would seem to be the former Avalon (called Avilion by Malory). Its wide marshes suggest a former island ; it was the burial place of Arthur and Guinevere, and the history of its ruins includes the legend of Joseph's arrival there. To Glastonbury St. Patrick came and remained there to preach to the people, gathering into a Brotherhood the hermits he found there descendants—one would like to believe—of the followers of Joseph. Glastonbury derived its name probably from the brothers Glast who settled there, or it may mean glassy sea, in reference to its first form of an island. An interesting history of Glastonbury Abbey may be found in Mr. Cram's book, and Mr. Frost's book of Arthurian stories tells of a journey to places of Arthurian interest.

One version of the Joseph story says that the vacant seat was left to represent Judas's place.

Chapter

VII.—Malory confuses the names of Pelles and Pellam and calls the latter Galahad's grandfather.

VIII.—The chapters relating to Elaine's visit to Camelot Malory, Book III., Chapter VII., are omitted as they relate more to the adventures of Sir Launcelot and are of no importance in the Galahad story.

IX.—Versions of the Galahad story usually commence with this chapter. It was so divided by its first author, and for this reason the introductory chapters of Galahad's infancy, the Wounding of Pellam, and Balin's Sword are generally omitted, and the reader loses one of the most beautiful parts of the story.

Chapter

One line in the Welsh version supplies an omission of Malory's, namely, how Galahad came to be with the nuns. "At the desire of King Pelles Galahad was taken from his mother and given into the keeping of nuns."

The name Elaine occurs frequently in the Arthurian stories and Galahad's mother must not be confused with Elaine "the lily maid of Astolat." Malory, Book XVIII., Chapter IX.

The Knighting of Galahad in Malory corresponds with the *Knighting of Lancelot*, probably from *Lancelot du Lac*, and suggests a repetition on the part of the author, since Mapes is supposed to have also written the *Lancelot*. The story is beautifully told in Mr. Newell's book, *King Arthur and the Table Round*.

Malory adds a "u" to Lancelot's name.

XI.—Galahad is spoken of as wearing red arms or robe and is often called the Red Knight. A quotation from one of the old stories suggests an explanation. "And as at Whitsuntide the Holy Spirit came to the Apostles in guise of fire, so at Whitsuntide Galahad came clad in red." Some one has suggested that white is the color of untried innocence and that red signifies the conquest of one "tried as though by fire."

The old man who brings Galahad to the Siege Perilous is supposed to be Joseph of Arimathea.

XIV.—The Quest of the Grail was not for all, yet naturally all were inspired to seek for a repetition of this rare vision; nor was the Quest futile, since it turned the thoughts of the Knights to higher things and inspired

Chapter

them to better living. Doubtless many soon returned to the Court.

XXII.—Malory miscalls Mordrains Evelake and thereby makes much confusion.

XXVI.—This chapter and the two following have been rewritten from pages of confused detail. Evidently the author modelled this part of the story on the Old Testament prophecies of Jesus, making Galahad of the royal line of David and the subject also of prophecy. Some new incidents are introduced with the stories related in the Prologue, namely, the wounding of various persons in the Ship. Malory speaks of Pelles being wounded here, but this has been omitted as it must be one of Malory's confused structures, the Wounding of Pellam by Balin being too clear for any other story to be considered.

XXXVI.—The name Galahad (called *Galaath* in the Welsh and translated Galaad) may have been derived from Gilead, and *Gales*, Wales, may have been named from him.

One version of the story says that Josephes, the son of Joseph of Arimathea, appeared to the three knights, but the text seems in every way to relate to Joseph.